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ABSTRACT

The role of the College Entrance Examination Board (College Board) in setting standards in secondary school education is traced historically. The first college entrance examinations, which became known as the College Boards) were administered in June 1901 around the country to 978 high school students. The rationale was that a set of common entrance examinations would be better than separate examinations by colleges. Two people who contributed greatly to creating the College Boards were President Charles William Eliot of Harvard University and Nicholas Murray Butler of Columbia University. Ten chapters cover the following: the original College Board, 1900-1948, an emphasis on standards during the formative years, the role of psychologists in developing the Scholastic Aptitude Test, objective tests and the creation of the Educational Testing Service, the evolution of the modern College Board after 1948, the Advanced Placement Program, commissions on Mathematics and English, the Achievement Tests, and an increased voice for faculty. The history indicates the capacity of the College Board to take a diverse set of positions over the years concerning its standard-setting role. A postscript on the College Board for 1980-1986 is provided by College Board President George H. Hanford. (SW)

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The College Board and the School Curriculum

A History of the College Board's Influence on the Substance and Standards of American Education,
1900–1980

John A. Valentine

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College Entrance Examination Board, New York, 1987

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To Richard Pearson, a believer in access, who opened doors for me.

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Foreword

Some anonymous philosophical quipster has observed that the secret of successful academic administration is to endure ambiguity with equanimity. (Anyone who has ever attended a college faculty meeting will surely agree.)

That, to a marked extent, has been the history of the College Board. Since its founding more than fourscore years ago, the College Board, like academe itself, has been beset with unresolved conflicts. Foremost and paramount in the Board's history, as John Valentine so aptly states it, is the conflict between a willing acceptance and utter rejection of a standard-setting role in secondary education.

In his characteristic engaging style, John traces how, over the years, the pendulum has swung from one side to the other in recurring cycles as the Board has responded to external events that shaped the national climate and to powerful voices within its leadership and membership. From time to time, articulate spokesmen argued persuasively for a final and definitive resolution of this historic ambiguity.

The truth probably is that any program that tests the outcomes of education must be clear about what the desired outcomes of education are, and must therefore, to some extent at least, influence the process of setting standards. Exactly where the pendulum should come to rest on the broad continuum between acceptance and rejection of a standard-setting role may never be precisely determined. What is important is that the ongoing conflict has led to a state of steady tension within the College Board that has been wholesome, constructive, and productive.

In developing this theme, John recalls how the debate engaged many of the best minds in education over many years. The story is a richly human, personal, and authoritative one, for many of the principals in recent decades were among John's friends, colleagues, and acquaintances. The reader senses how conscientiously, in all phases of its programs, the College Board has sought, and continues to seek, the involvement of representatives of both the colleges and the secondary schools of our nation in as democratic a manner as possible. As a result of these efforts, the College Board has provided much more than an open forum for dialogue among faculty and administrators of our nation's secondary schools and institutions of higher learning: It has become the single national agency through which university, college, and secondary school representatives at all levels and in all areas can meet, discuss, decide, and work as equals in mutual respect and cooperation. (All of us who have ever served on any of the committees, boards, commissions, or workshops of the College Board appreciate what a rare privilege that is.)

John's story will be of genuine interest, not alone to teachers in schools and colleges (especially those who in one capacity or another have worked with the College Board) and to educational administrators and members of boards, but also to all citizens who have a deep concern for the future of education in the United States. For it relates, step by step, how the "unresolved conflict" has gradually led the College Board to become our nation's conscience in matters of educational excellence and equality of educational opportunity.

At a time when, as a nation, we are just beginning to appreciate the full meaning of Alfred North Whitehead's statement that "any society that does not value trained intelligence is surely doomed," what could be more important than that!

C. A. VanderWerf

Professor of Chemistry
University of Florida, Gainesville

Preface

The central theme of this history of the College Board is a conflict that developed early in the Board's life – a conflict between willing acceptance and utter rejection of a standard-setting role in secondary school education. To influence, or not to influence the school curriculum has been a question as troublesome for the Board as Hamlet's "to be, or not to be" was for him. My primary intent has been to describe how this question arose and how through changing times and circumstances the Board responded to it, first one way, then the opposite way, and eventually both ways at once. The book could be considered a case history of a deeply embedded institutional dilemma.

While this particular slant necessitated a fairly full account of the Board's origins and of its evolution during eight decades, the account the book provides is decidedly selective. The book does not deal with many important aspects of the Board and its history; it also makes no attempt to address a number of issues that have attracted wide attention, including the possibility of test bias, the effects of coaching, the importance of College Board test scores in admissions decisions, and the need for government regulation of standardized testing programs. It is a one-track book.

When I think of those who I hope will read the book and find something of value in it, my mind fixes on three main categories. One category consists of school and college teachers, including those serving currently or in the past as members of Board committees, whose interest in the Board centers on its relevance to their concerns. As a one-time college faculty member, long since "defrocked" as my friend and colleague Jack Arbolino once said, I spent some of my most satisfying hours as a Board staff member meeting and working with teachers. It will please me if the book holds interest for them.

The second category consists of all those directly involved in the Board's affairs, as representatives of member institutions, as appointed officers, or as members of the Board and Educational Testing Service staffs. My hope is that the book will help them to see the Board in a broader and perhaps clearer light.

The final category consists of professional historians whose special interest is the history of American education. My wish is that they will find a useful nugget or two in the book. If this is too wishful, however, I will gladly settle for their taking their more expert steps toward a more complete account of the aspect of the Board's history with which this book deals.

I am indebted to many for help. My major indebtedness is to George Hanford, the Board's president from 1979 to 1986, for four important reasons. First, he gave me the opportunity to write this history as my last assignment as a member of the College Board's staff. Second, he gave me his constant encouragement and support. Third, he gave me the freedom to write as I saw fit. Fourth, he agreed to bring the story I tell up-to-date by writing the postscript that appears at the end of the book.

I am grateful to the following reviewers of early drafts for helping me to find my way: Virginia Deane, Henry Dyer, Aaron Fink, Robert Hampel, Harlan Hanson, Ernest Kimmel, Fay Metcalf, Norman Parsons, Richard Pearson, Robert Solomon, and Peter Stearns. Many drafts later I benefited from the thoughtful suggestions of Jack Arbolino, Robert Orrill, and Robert Seaver. In the final stages it was a stroke of fortune for me and the book that it came under the expert editorial eye and hand of Patricia Wyatt. She was ably and diligently assisted by Janet Falcone, a free-lance copy editor who has worked on many College Board publications. The book's stylish look is due to the artistry of my friend of many years, Freeman Craw.

I owe special thanks to Judith Wilmot for tracking down source materials, compiling summaries, and generally creating order out of disorder. For making materials lodged in archives available to me I am grateful to Dorothy Heindel at the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, Gary Saretzky at Educational Testing Service, and Laurie Green and Yvonne Wharton at the College Board. I would still be wrestling vainly with the technology of word processing had I not had at hand such experts in the field as La Verne Branch, Brenda Coleman, Michael Dagley, Edmund Jacobson, Sheila Kokidko, John Lytton, and Nica Mrowzinski at the College Board.

The list of those who through their written or spoken words added to my knowledge of the Board's history is very long. I would like to single out for special tribute Claude M. Fuess, whose book, *The College Board: Its First Fifty Years,* has stood for many years as the only substantial historical account. His book served me well, as it has countless others.

John A. Valentine

Part 1.

The Original College Board 1900–1948

1. "Eliot's Idea and Butler's Triumph": How It All Began

The College Entrance Examination Board assembled for the first time on 17 November 1900 in the trustees' room of Columbia University; seven months later, during a week in June, its entrance examinations – soon referred to as the College Boards – were administered at sites around the country to 978 secondary school students. What up to then had been an idea was at last a reality. Reduced to its kernel, the idea was simple enough – everyone would be better served if colleges used a set of common entrance examinations instead of their own separate examinations.

Giving concrete form to this idea was not at all simple, however. Militating against its realization were the fact that colleges were not accustomed to cooperate with one another – it was an age of individualism for institutions as well as for individuals – and the fact that no two colleges insisted on quite the same secondary school preparation – there were differences of opinion not only about the subjects students should have studied but about the precise nature of the preparation in each subject. According to Claude M. Fuess the situation was one of "educational anarchy."[1]

In the closing decade of the nineteenth century, a number of developments took place that set the stage for the Board and finally brought about its appearance. Two people participated so prominently and persistently in these developments that one historian was moved to single them out as the Board's creators. "The College Board," Edward Krug declared, was "Eliot's idea and Butler's triumph."[2]

Eliot was President Charles William Eliot of Harvard University, a mover and shaker of American education at all levels for more than a half century. Butler, 30 years his junior, was Nicholas Murray Butler of Columbia University, a man of tremendous energy, initiative, and also ego, who undertook with success so many educational ventures that others called him Nicholas Miraculous behind his back, sometimes admiringly and sometimes with an edge. The gap in their ages did not prevent the two men from working together effectively and amicably.

Eliot was a spokesman for common entrance examinations as early as 1890, a full decade before they saw the light of day. In that year he incorporated the idea in a speech he gave at a meeting of the National Educational Association (NEA) in St. Paul, Minnesota. (In 1907 the association's name would be changed to the National Education Association.) Characteristically, he had a practical, specific proposal in mind:

> We may hope to see formed a combination of four, five, or six of the universities which have large departments of arts and sciences to conduct simultaneously, at well-selected points all over the country, examinations in all of the subjects anywhere acceptable for admission to colleges or professional schools, the answer-papers to be marked by persons annually selected by the combined universities, and announced to the public, all results to be published but without the names of candidates, and certificates to be good anywhere for the subjects mentioned in them. We see reason to believe that such a cooperative system would be simple though extensive; that it would present no serious difficulties, mechanical or other; that it would be very convenient and economical for candidates and self-supporting at a moderate fee; and finally that it would be authoritative, flexible, stimulating, unifying, and just.[3]

The title of his speech was "The Gap between Common Schools and the Colleges." Eliot was looking to the examination system he proposed to effect a closing of this gap—to so stimulate schools to raise the level of their instruction that they would function as effective bridges between elementary and higher education. It disturbed him, he said, that "in the present condition of secondary education one-half of the most capable children in the country, at a modest estimate, have no open road to colleges and universities."[4]

The "condition of secondary education" in 1890 actually involved endowed academies, college preparatory departments, and private schools, as well as public high schools, but Eliot along with other educational leaders had his eye fixed mainly on the last. In the preceding 10 years the number of public schools had more than doubled, and although it was not known that the number would double again in the next decade, the trend was unmistakable. Total enrollments in public schools were also rising rapidly; the number of high school graduates had increased from 23,634 in 1880 to 43,731 in 1890, and it would reach 94,883 by 1900.[5]

Private schools not only were growing at a slower pace but were already so committed to college preparation that there was not much question about their readiness to serve as bridges to colleges. This was their essential purpose. In contrast, the purpose that public high schools were supposed to serve was highly controversial. Some educators maintained that they should serve the practical needs of citizens and society in a period of changes wrought by industrialization, urbanization, and immigration – that they should be "people's colleges." These educators resented the efforts of persons like Eliot to mold high schools into feeder schools for colleges and universities.

Eliot realized that the burden of raising the educational standards of public schools rested primarily on local and state governments. He was a vigorous advocate of state support for strong academic programs in the schools. He favored the system adopted in Minnesota, where inspectors from the department of education evaluated schools and the state gave financial support to schools that met certain educational standards. One condition prescribed in Minnesota was that schools offer "regular and orderly courses of study, embracing all the branches prescribed as prerequisite for admission to the collegiate department of the University of Minnesota."[6]

Eliot believed a system involving the evaluation and certification of schools by state officials was preferable to the system the University of Michigan had initiated in 1870–71, which called on members of the university faculty to serve as on-site school inspectors. Graduates of schools that met with faculty approval – that were "accredited" in a later manner of speaking – were admitted to the University of Michigan if their schools recommended them; they were not required to take the entrance examinations required of other applicants. Eliot questioned whether faculty members had either the time or the inclination to evaluate schools' programs effectively and whether, in fact, this was a proper function for members of a university faculty.

Eliot was even more sharply critical of the practice of many private colleges in the East of admitting some applicants on the basis of "certificates" issued by their schools. Some educators associated this practice with the practices in Michigan, Minnesota, and other midwestern states, although it differed from them markedly in that it did not include visits to schools to evaluate their programs but was based instead on amicable and informal agreements between certain colleges and certain secondary schools. Applicants the schools certified were admitted to the colleges without futher ado. "Certificates," Eliot declared, were "apt to be accepted from good and bad schools alike, the anxiety to secure students in a struggling college overriding every other consideration."[7]

Eliot placed considerable stock in examinations. In his inaugural address as president of Harvard in 1869 he devoted a section to Harvard's entrance examinations. Noting their increasing "dignity and importance," he compared them with the baccalaureate examinations in France. He suggested that their value lay in their power to test the quality of school instruction as well as the capacity of students. He also observed approvingly that the examinations prevented "a waste of instruction upon incompetent persons."[8]

In his comments about the prospect of common entrance examinations Eliot was specific about the institutions he foresaw using the examinations. They were to be "universities," he said, with "large departments of arts and sciences," and there were to be "four, five, or six" altogether. Which institutions was he thinking of? Presumably he had Harvard in mind as one. Other institutions in the East that met his specifications included Columbia, Cornell, Johns Hopkins, Pennsylvania, Princeton, and Yale. A few state universities in other regions of the country also qualified – including the University of Michigan and the University of California – although most state institutions were surprisingly small at the time considering the great size they were destined to attain. Achieving the status of a "university," with its Germanic emphasis on scientific research and scholarship, was the order of the day for a very small minority of institutions that had the leadership and resources necessary to make such a goal feasible.

Within this pool of universities Eliot probably took it for granted that hopes for his proposal rested with institutions that were private and Eastern. Major state institutions in the Midwest and Far West not only favored admission by accreditation over admission by examination but were not likely in any case to be enthusiastic about any venture associated with Harvard and the East.

Standing out in contrast to institutions claiming or seeking university status were the hundreds of small colleges that dotted the land. The typical college, rooted in the English tradition, relied on a dozen or so faculty members to educate a hundred or so students in sparse facilities and on a modest budget. Many colleges were denominational, choosing their presidents from the ranks of the clergy and basing their curriculums firmly on Greek, Latin, and the Bible. To ensure a supply of students, most depended on their own preparatory departments.

For a system of common entrance examinations to work, even one confined to a few institutions in the same part of the country, a first requirement was that these institutions agree on the subjects to be examined and on the boundaries and substance of each of these subjects. This was a tall order. Disagreements abounded among colleges about which subjects belonged in the undergraduate curriculum, and faculty members who taught a given subject tended to have widely differing opinions about the kinds of knowledge and skills that students most needed to acquire.

A succession of new subjects infiltrated the college curriculum throughout the nineteenth century. Greek, Latin, and elementary mathematics could be counted on as hardy survivors of the 1700s. They were joined in time by English composition and then by English literature; by ancient history and then by the history of more modern periods; by one new branch after another of mathematics and of science; and, finally, by French, German, and other modern languages.

The extent to which colleges assimilated these subjects and the manner in which they offered them were subject to considerable variation. While some institutions followed Harvard's lead in making an increasing number of courses available on an elective basis, other institutions were holding firm to a set pattern of required courses in revered subjects for all students. Some institutions offered science courses as part of their regular curriculum; a few, notably Harvard and Yale, offered them in special schools. Modern languages were offered as courses at some colleges, as extracurricular pursuits at other colleges.

One encouraging sign was that educators from different institutions and different regions were increasingly coming together to talk about matters of mutual interest and concern. The National Educational Association, the body Eliot addressed in 1890, was a case in point. While it had been holding meetings since its founding in 1857 (until 1870 it was the National Teachers' Association), it had only in recent years become a significant national forum in which prominent figures in higher education as well as in elementary and secondary education assembled from all parts of the country to debate major issues of the day.

Societies of scholars in various fields were also helping to draw professors away from their campuses into meetings with colleagues in other parts of the country. Rapidly improving means of travel and communication were facilitating the activities of existing societies and helping to bring about new ones. By the middle of the nineteenth century the American Philosophical Society and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences had stood almost alone as national academic bodies for more than 80 years. In 1848, however, the American Association for the Advancement of Science came into being, starting a wave that included by 1889 the American Philological Association, the American Chemical Society, the Modern Language Association of America, the American Historical Association, the American Economic Association, the American Mathematical Society, and the Geological Society of America.

This urge to associate on a regular basis also extended to institutions. Eliot himself had a hand in establishing the New England Association of Colleges and Preparatory Schools in 1885. This was in response to pleas from representatives of the Massachusetts Classical and High School Teachers Association that some way be found for a dialogue to be opened between colleges and schools. They were growing increasingly frustrated by the diversity of college entrance requirements. The New England Association was hailed as "the first attempt in this country to bring together for the common good educators and educational institutions from the same geographical area."[9] It became the model for the North Central Association and other regional associations of colleges and schools.

Even more directly relevant to Eliot's scheme for a common examinations board were the efforts of a few groups of faculty members to establish uniform entrance requirements in their particular subjects. Representatives of several New England colleges had tried as early as 1879, at a meeting at Trinity College, to formulate a uniform requirement in English. Another step in this direction was taken by the New England Association of Colleges and Preparatory Schools, soon after its establishment, through its creation of a commission on admissions requirements. In 1889 the commission produced a list of books for required study in English, which many of the colleges in the New England Association used as a basis for their respective entrance examinations in English.[10]

In 1894, four years after presenting his proposal before the National Educational Association, with no discernible results, Eliot made essentially the same proposal at the annual meeting of the New England Association, this time confining its scope to institutions in that region. It was greeted by those present with little show of interest, much less enthusiasm. He noted later, "I hardly think that the proposition was regarded . . . as one seriously to be taken up. At any rate it was not taken up."[11]

Despite his enormous influence Eliot was not able to engineer the creation of a set of common entrance examinations. It was Butler who performed this task, with Eliot an invaluable ally.

Both Eliot and Butler were involved in the creation and the work of the Committee of Ten of the National Educational Association, whose 1893 report is generally believed to have profoundly influenced the shaping of the American high school curriculum. Recommending a strong academic program, the committee set forth definitions of nine subjects, both classical and modern, that it believed should be included on an equal footing in the curriculum. By helping to establish some degree of uniformity in the way schools organized their curriculums, these definitions helped to prepare the way for a common examinations system. Eliot was the strong chairman of the Committee of Ten, Butler the behind-the-scenes organizer and promoter who later took the lead in publicizing the committee's report.[12]

The influence of the Committee of Ten was more pronounced on secondary schools than it was on colleges, which continued to set their own specific entrance requirements despite the committee's plea for greater uniformity. The NEA therefore created a second committee, the Committee on College Entrance Requirements, which called on authoritative bodies of scholars in various academic areas to draw up definitions of requirements, subject by subject. These were included in the committee's report, issued in 1899. Butler served briefly as a member of the Committee on College Entrance Requirements; he withdrew when he concluded, apparently, that it would take more than the urgings of even a respected national committee to cause colleges to adopt uniform requirements. In any case, he was busy by then with his own plans for a common examinations system.[13]

In 1893 – an up-and-coming young dean at Columbia at the time – Butler proposed to the Columbia faculty that they take the lead in organizing a college admissions board for colleges in New England and the Middle States. He did not ask for a vote and his resolution was tabled, but he had sown the seed. He proceeded to exercise his considerable political skills in building support for the scheme, first at Columbia and then at a few other prominent institutions. He had ready allies in the headmasters of preparatory schools whose students planned to attend college but who were being driven to distraction by divergent college requirements. Said one high school principal, "How can I treat my students who are looking forward to entering different colleges at which examinations for admission are held at different times, with different requirements and sharply differing definitions of one and the same nominal requirement?"[14]

A particularly useful ally was Wilson Farrand, the highly respected headmaster of Newark Academy. Farrand had participated in the establishment of the National Conference on Uniform Entrance Requirements in English, an outgrowth of the 1879 efforts in New England to achieve uniformity, which were referred to earlier. In 1895 Farrand was president of the Headmasters' Association of New York and Vicinity. He decided to use the annual meeting of the association in New York as an occasion to focus attention on the necessity for colleges to set uniform requirements. Farrand invited Eliot to be present to state the case, once again, for his proposition, and Eliot lost no time in coming to the point. Almost his first words were, "The thing we need to secure a uniform standard of enforcement by subject is an examination board."[15]

This time Eliot had the satisfaction of hearing a positive response. In the audience along with Butler was President Seth Low of Columbia, who rose to say that Columbia would be taking steps to organize such a board. At the next meeting of the Columbia faculty, Butler's 1893 resolution was reintroduced and the faculty endorsed it unanimously. Butler thereupon organized a meeting at Columbia of representatives of six institutions popularly known as the Big Six: Columbia, Cornell, Harvard, Pennsylvania, Princeton, and Yale. They agreed on the importance of reaching agreement on requirements in various subjects, but their differences of opinion were too deep-seated for them to achieve such agreement.

Butler was not discouraged; he had another card up his sleeve. In 1893 he had helped to bring about the formation of the Association of Colleges and Preparatory Schools of the Middle States and Maryland, and in 1896 he was elected the association's president. He began to set the stage for this association to sponsor the establishment of an entrance examination board, choosing the annual meeting in December 1899 in Trenton, New Jersey, as the time and place to make the decisive move. The timing was probably influenced by the fact that the report of the NEA Committee on College Entrance Requirements had been issued earlier in the year.

Eliot responded to Butler's invitation by taking the train from Boston to Trenton to attend the meeting as the association's guest. It was Butler, however, who presented the proposal for an entrance examination board under the aegis of the association. The board would be composed of colleges in the association that wished to join and of a few individuals appointed by the association who would represent the interests of secondary schools. Its first task would be to settle on the subjects to be examined and on their definitions; in this it would be guided by the report of the NEA Committee on College Entrance Requirements. Its examinations would be prepared by committees that included school as well as college teachers, and schoolteachers would also participate in the reading and grading of answer papers. Expenses of the total operation would be paid by charging each candidate a five-dollar fee.

In the discussion that followed, Low and several secondary school representatives spoke in favor of the proposal. Rising in strong objection, however, were President Francis Landey Patton of Princeton and President Ethelbert D. Warfield of Lafayette. Patton said the scheme seemed to lead toward a state examination system that might eventually become the basis for awards of degrees as well as offers of admission. He also sensed pressure imposed on conservative institutions such as Princeton to offer more elective subjects, especially in the first two years, and he doubted that a fee of five dollars would be sufficient to cover the costs entailed. At this point Eliot spoke for the first time. He said he simply wanted to make clear that state control was neither part of the plan nor remotely a possibility.[16]

Warfield protested that Lafayette College could not allow an outside board to prevent it from admitting the sons of benefactors, trustees, or faculty members, however deficient their preparation might appear to be. Eliot rose again and explained that the proposed board would not take away from a college its right to decide whom to admit. According to Butler's account many years later – for some reason it was not in the minutes of the meeting – Eliot went on to assure Warfield that "it will be perfectly practicable under this plan for Lafayette College to say, if it chooses, that it will admit only such students as cannot pass these examinations. No one proposes to deprive Lafayette College of that privilege." Butler's account has it that this produced a storm of laughter and helped to swing the eventual vote toward unanimous approval of the proposal.[17]

With this new sanction for their plan, Butler and Low returned to Columbia and proceeded to implement it. Arrangements were made almost immediately for a letter to be sent to the presidents of the colleges in the association, inviting them to attend, or send representatives to, an organizational meeting at Columbia. The letter, signed by the presidents of Columbia, Cornell, and Union and by the provost of Pennsylvania, stipulated that to be eligible to join the board, colleges needed to have at least 50 students in their entering classes.

Representatives of 12 institutions attended the meeting of 22 December 1899 along with three of the secondary school representatives appointed by the association. They agreed on a long name for the board that Eliot had spoken of in 1895 at the annual meeting of the Headmasters' Association – the College Entrance Examination Board of the Middle States and Maryland – and they appointed a committee to draft a constitution and draw up plans of procedure. It is interesting to note that, almost immediately, the practice of calling it the College Board or the Board seems to have caught on. At the next meeting, in

May 1900, the representatives reviewed the documents produced and agreed that these should be sent to the presidents on the original mailing list together with a letter requesting their response to two key questions: "Will you join the Board?" and "Will you accept certificates issued by the Board?"[18]

Representatives of 12 institutions were present when the officially constituted Board finally met on 17 November 1900: Barnard College, Bryn Mawr College, Columbia University, Cornell University, Johns Hopkins University, New York University, University of Pennsylvania, Rutgers College, Swarthmore College, Union College, Vassar College, and Woman's College of Baltimore (now Goucher College). Two institutions, Colgate University and Haverford College, had expressed interest in joining but were judged to be ineligible because their entering classes did not have as many as 50 students. Five secondary school representatives brought the total charter membership to 17. The colleges were represented by seven presidents, four professors, and one dean.

An Executive Committee was formed, with Low serving as chairman and M. Carey Thomas, president of Bryn Mawr, serving as vice chairman. Other members were James M. Taylor, president of Vassar College; William A. Lamberton, a University of Pennsylvania faculty member; and Julius Sachs, founder of the Sachs Collegiate Institute in New York City.

Butler was officially named secretary and was unofficially understood to be the one running the show. Early in 1901 Low resigned as president of Columbia to run successfully for mayor of New York City, and the trustees selected Butler to succeed him. At the same time the Executive Committee appointed Butler to succeed Low as chairman. There was little of significance in the growth of Columbia during the preceding decade that Butler had not had a hand in, and once in command of the reins he continued to work on making the university what he liked to call "a national and international powerhouse of scholarship and service."[19] As the self-acknowledged father of the College Board, however, he did not neglect his paternal responsibilities. For 13 years he nurtured the fledgling organization, alert to its potential powers and also to any dangers that threatened its survival and growth.

Appointed to replace Butler as the Board's secretary was Thomas Scott Fiske, a professor of mathematics at Columbia. Fiske had his own flair for initiating new educational enterprises; he had worked to found the New York Mathematical Society and later to expand this body into the American Mathematical Society. He continued to keep up his teaching and other activities at Columbia while managing the Board's affairs. The Board claimed a full measure of his devotion, however. "Its welfare was his chief ambition in life," a colleague commented on the occasion of Fiske's retirement 35 years later.[20]

Firmly in place as a corporate body, the Board faced the challenge of organizing and administering a successful external system of entrance examinations. Precedents for an external examination system existed in England and other countries and also in New York State, where the Regents examinations provided a model close at hand. The Board was unusual, however, in its total dependence on the willingness of colleges to insist, voluntarily, that applicants take its tests. Most of the colleges that were charter members of the Board were in no rush to take this step, preferring to stick with their own familiar entrance devices and procedures while waiting, perhaps, to see how the new examinations worked out. Only three institutions moved in the first year of the Board's operation to require all applicants to take its examinations. It was no coincidence that all three – Barnard, Columbia, and N.Y.U. – were in New York City. Butler had not overlooked the first necessity of any examination program: a supply of examinees.

On the matter of which subjects to include in the program and how to define their content, Butler worked closely with Farrand. They selected nine subjects initially, each of which met two basic criteria: (1) it was included in the report of the NEA Committee on College Entrance Requirements and (2) it was required of applicants by at least one member college. The nine subjects, approved by the full Board in 1901, were chemistry, English, French, German, Greek, history, Latin, mathematics, and physics. Botany and zoology were also considered at that time, but action on them was postponed because of uncertainties about their status in school programs and the attitudes of college faculties toward them.

The subject definitions followed closely those recommended by the Committee on College Entrance Requirements. The source of the definition in English was the National Conference on Uniform Entrance Requirements in English. In history it was the Committee of Seven of the American Historical Association, in Latin and Greek the American Philological Association, and in French and German the Modern Language Association. Definitions for mathematics, chemistry, and physics all derived from committees of the NEA. When it came time to announce the Board's program, Butler emphasized that the definitions had their origins in these authoritative bodies and were not the products of arbitrary decisions by the College Board.

Definitions varied in form, length, and specificity. The definition for elementary algebra – one of several mathematical subjects – was a model of brevity:

> 1. *To Quadratics,* including the four fundamental operations for rational algebraic expressions, factoring, highest common divisor, least common multiple, complex fractions, the solution of equations of the first degree containing one or more unknown quantities, radicals and fractional exponents.
>
> 2. *Quadratics and beyond,* including quadratic equations in one and two unknown quantities, ratio and proportion, the progressions, the elementary treatment of permutations and combinations, the binomial theorem for positive integral exponents and the use of logarithms.[21]

The requirement in English prescribed certain books for "reading" and others for "study and practice." Students were expected to have "fresh in their minds the most important parts" of the 10 books assigned for reading, including *The Merchant of Venice, The Vicar of Wakefield, The Ancient Mariner, The Last of the Mohicans,* and *Silas Marner.* They were advised that they would be tested for their power of clear and accurate expression; knowledge of the books would be regarded as less important than the ability to write good English.

It was expected that the books specified for study and practice, including *Macbeth,* Milton's *Lycidas,* and Burke's speech *Conciliation with America,* would be so thoroughly studied that questions could be asked about even minute details.[22]

Latin proved to be the most difficult subject to define uniformly because each college apparently insisted on maintaining at least some vestige of its own special requirement. Farrand ruefully concluded that it would be "no easy task to frame a requirement that will suit the warring factions."[23] The result was one grammar requirement for all students, three options for Latin composition, and nine additional options described as acceptable "at the discretion of colleges."[24] This division of a subject into so many separate compartments drew fire from one critic who foresaw the time when the Board would be driven to construct "12,000 Chinese cells" for what he said would be "the crowning effectiveness of this scheme."[25]

Plans called for each list of prescribed books or other works to hold for two years, after which it would be replaced by a new list, possibly including some holdovers, for the next three years. The task of getting the definitions, once they were agreed on, into the hands of teachers was facilitated by including them in the *Educational Review,* a journal that Butler had started and made good use of in spreading word about ideas and developments that were important to him.

The next task was to develop examinations that would stand up to the critical scrutiny of teachers in both colleges and schools. As Butler was to reminisce later:

> It was necessary to select teachers [as examiners] whom everybody in their field knew and respected. But we couldn't just pick them for window dressing. They would have to work, and the whole Board would be judged by what they did. They were to prepare examinations for an extraordinarily critical body of secondary school teachers, sensitive and proud, teachers who knew how and where the Regents' examinations had failed. If the tests were too easy, teachers would laugh; if they were too hard, they would complain. Furthermore we had only the Middle States to choose from, and that left out a good many fine men from New England and from some of the best colleges. Sometimes I think it was the hardest job I ever did.[26]

Chief examiners – each of them a college teacher – were appointed for all nine subjects in November 1900, and in the next two months associate examiners – one from a college and one from a school – were appointed. Each committee of three then met to draft one or more examinations, as many as the definitions called for. The task must have seemed both familiar and strange to them, familiar because they were familiar with the kinds of examinations they were expected to prepare, and strange because it was unusual for college teachers to join forces with secondary school teachers.

To ensure as much uniformity as possible in the nature and rigor of the examinations and to spot possible flaws, a committee was appointed to go over drafts of all examinations with care. Called the Committee of Revision, it consisted of the nine chief examiners and the five secondary school members of the Board. The committee spent many hours poring over and discussing the drafts in March 1901. The task proved so time-consuming in 1901 and in the following year that Farrand suggested to Butler that next time, the secondary school men meet first to identify the questions they thought most urgently required revisions by the full committee.[27] Butler agreed. Farrand and his secondary school colleagues were apparently determined to take full advantage of their opportunity at long last to look at college entrance examinations while there was still time to improve them.

During these stages of examination construction Butler applied himself to the task of arranging for their administration at more than 60 sites during the third week of June. A supervisor was appointed for each site. Butler also oversaw arrangements for candidates to register and pay fees, for readers to be appointed and assembled to grade the answer papers, and for certificates on which grades were recorded to be mailed to the candidates. (The practice of reporting test scores to colleges was instituted many years later.)

Of the 978 students who took the first examinations in June 1901, 738 were applicants to Columbia and many of the others were applicants either to Barnard or to N.Y.U.

Thirty-nine readers assembled from schools and colleges to grade the answer papers in facilities provided by Columbia, which also made lodging available to readers who came from any distance. A chief reader was appointed for each examination. A 100-point scale was adopted, and grades from 60 to 69 were described as "passing." Before the reading began in earnest, readers graded and discussed a number of answers on a trial basis in order to achieve a common standard. The standards established were demanding; 40 percent of all examination books received grades that were below 60. The failure rate varied considerably from subject to subject; more than 50 percent of the students who took the Greek examination failed while fewer than 30 percent of those taking the mathematics examinations did this poorly.

Although the purpose of the reading was to establish grades, the experience of joining with others in such a task had personal significance for most if not all readers. It offered a rare opportunity for teachers from colleges and schools to work together on an activity highly relevant to their special fields of interest, to pick up new insights and perspectives, and to form congenial relationships. In its own distinctive way it helped to build consensus among those who taught a given subject regarding its purpose and substance.

The external entrance examination program of the College Board had run its course for the first time. Despite its complexity and the countless possibilities of malfunction, it had worked out much as planned. It was by no means a one-man performance. Important roles were played by the examiners, readers, and test center supervisors as well as by the members of the Board itself and of its Executive Committee. Fiske also had a significant part in the total performance. But Butler was the conductor, following his own score, directing different sections of the orchestra to come in at the right times, and all the while sensing how the audience was reacting.

In the autobiography he wrote years later, Butler cited three purposes he believed the College Board served. One purpose was to "bring order out of chaos in the matter of college admission." A second purpose was to "more closely relate the work of the colleges to that of the secondary schools." The third purpose was to "raise the standards of secondary instruction throughout the country."[28]

2. Accent on Standards: Formative Years

Having gained a foothold, the College Board slowly grew in membership, expanded the scope of its operations, and along the way developed both a modus operandi and a certain urbane style. While the definitions of requirements and the examinations based on these definitions – interlocked components of the Board's program – were mainly viewed by Butler and others as serving the admissions needs of member institutions, they were also considered to serve broader educational purposes, helping to unify and raise the level of secondary school instruction and bringing schools and colleges together in a wholesome, cooperative relationship.

In 1901 three additional member institutions of the Association of Colleges and Preparatory Schools of the Middle States and Maryland joined the Board: Lehigh University, Washington and Jefferson College, and Western University of Pennsylvania. Butler's eye roamed beyond the boundaries of the Middle States Association, however, even though the College Board was a creation of this body. Particularly eager to bring New England institutions into the fold, he arranged for them to be invited to join. Notifying the Middle States Association in 1901 of this step, he pointed out that in the event one or more of them did join, the Board would drop from its name "of the Middle States and Maryland."[1] Three New England institutions did decide to join: the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Mount Holyoke College, and Wellesley College. Fiske dutifully reported this development to the Middle States Association at its next annual meeting.[2]

Harvard did not join until 1904, despite President Eliot's leading role in the campaign to organize an examinations board. Eliot was understandably relieved. In a May 1904 letter to Butler he wrote: "The Harvard Faculty moves slowly, but it moves. It will be ten years next November since I outlined a general admissions examination board to the New England Association and could not interest the Association at all, or the Harvard Faculty. You and Mr. Low have done this thing. . . . The country will thank you twenty years hence. I want to congratulate you now."[3]

Yale and Princeton, which along with Harvard would come to dominate the Board in years to come, delayed even longer before taking the plunge; Yale finally joined in 1909 and Princeton in 1910.

A surprising development in 1902 was a request to join the Board that came out of the blue from Case School of Applied Science in Cleveland, Ohio. Following its admission it was decided that membership in the Board was open to colleges in all parts of the country provided they were members of a regional association of colleges and schools and had entering classes of at least 50 students. Provisions also were made to include in the Board secondary school representatives of any region in which a certain minimum number of college members were based.

In a few short years the Board had become a national educational organization, although it actually retained for decades a decidedly regional orientation; participating colleges, schools, and candidates continued to be heavily concentrated in the East.

New and unusually stringent conditions for membership were established in 1905. They included standards of preparation of incoming students as rigorous as those demanded by current members, academic training of faculty members "adequate to maintain a high standard of teaching," a curriculum of appropriate breadth and difficulty, and high graduation standards.[4]

This evident preoccupation with standards pervaded every aspect of the Board and its activities. When the New York State Department of Education joined in 1905, the possibility was discussed for a while that the Board's examinations might serve in place of the Regents examinations. The grounds for deciding not to pursue this possibility were mainly practical, but concerns were also expressed that the administration of the Board's examinations to such an expanded clientele of students might make it difficult for the Board to maintain its high standards.

The Board's program expanded in the first few years to embrace many new subjects. In 1902 examinations were introduced in botany, drawing, geography, and Spanish; in 1905 three new examinations in Latin made their debut; and examinations in music and zoology were added in 1907. When it became apparent as time went on that certain examinations were taken by only a handful of candidates, the Executive Committee moved to withdraw them from the program. This was true for one of the Greek examinations that involved sight translation of Homer and for one of the music examinations.

Before any new examination was introduced, it was first necessary to formulate and publicize at least a year in advance a statement describing the preparation expected of candidates. Such a statement – called a definition of requirements – was also needed whenever the time came to revise an existing definition. For several years the practice was followed of inviting appropriate scholarly associations to formulate or revise definitions. The drafts they produced were then reviewed and acted on by the Executive Committee and by the full Board.

Although this system continued to work well for most of the subjects in which the Board offered examinations, it began to present problems for a few subjects. It was the practice of some associations to respond to requests from the Board for definitions by appointing special, one-time committees; this sometimes resulted in awkward inconsistencies between the definitions of successive committees because of different perspectives. In addition, as associations became increasingly preoccupied with scholarship and research in their fields, their interest in the secondary school curriculum tended to wane. It became difficult to find association members who knew or cared very much about the definitions of requirements.

To deal with this situation, Farrand, who continued to play a creative and an influential role in the workings of the Board, proposed the formation of a new standing committee that would deal with all questions concerning definitions of requirements. In 1907 such a committee was appointed and named the Committee of Review. Byron Satterlee Hurlbut, dean of Harvard College, was appointed chairman, and Farrand was named one of three secondary school members. One of the options open to the committee was to recommend that the Board appoint its own commissions to draft requirement definitions.

In its first year the Committee of Review recommended the creation of two commissions, one to develop a revised definition for history and the other a revised definition for physics. The committee also made arrangements for the Modern Language Association to prepare a revised list of recommended books in French and German. The next commission to be appointed was for Latin, and there followed in ensuing years a stream of more than 30 commissions concerned with the definitions of requirements for a wide span of academic subjects.

It became standard practice for the recommendations of a commission to be circulated widely by the Committee of Review well in advance of final action on them. Interested teachers in schools and colleges were encouraged to express their reactions in letters to the Board, and the Committee of Review took the views expressed into account in formulating its final recommendations for action by the Executive Committee and the Board as a whole. It was the opinion of Claude M. Fuess that the Committee of Review "became a paramount factor in the evolution of the secondary school curriculum, with a salutary influence on both subject matter and teaching methods."[5]

The Board's definitions of requirements set the boundaries for the entrance examinations. Committees of examiners were guided in the first instance by the definitions in deciding how to go about developing their examinations. The definitions frequently included descriptive statements about the nature of the examinations, further limiting the freedom of examiners.

While the Committee of Review focused its attention on the definitions of requirements, another committee, the Committee of Revision (described in chapter 1), continued to focus its attention on the examinations. Each year this committee reviewed drafts of all examinations and revised those that seemed flawed in some way – perhaps because they were out of line with patterns set by previous examinations in the same subject and sometimes because they appeared to be too difficult or too easy.

The actual difficulty of any examination, however, was a function not only of the questions it asked but of the standards readers used when they graded the answers. An examination that seemed unreasonably difficult because of the kinds of questions it asked could turn out to be easy if the answers were graded leniently, while stringent grading standards could transform a seemingly easy examination into a hard one. Whether standards were reasonable was difficult to determine. Variations in grades from subject to subject and from year to year in the same subject became a common source of interest and concern.

For several years, for example, the failure rate in history so exceeded the rate in other subjects that it became particularly perplexing. Examiners, readers, and others who were concerned wondered if the explanation lay in the examination or in the instruction that schools were providing. The chief reader reported that in his judgment the schools were at fault rather than the examinations or the way they were graded. If schools would only improve their teaching of history, he suggested, the failure rate in history would begin to approach that for other subjects.[6]

Not all discrepancies in grading were resolved quite so confidently, and the belief grew that something more needed to be done to understand and act on them. In 1910 Farrand came up with the suggestion that yet another standing committee be established, this one to be specifically charged with overseeing the grading of examinations. The result was the appointment by Board Chairman Butler of the Committee on Examination Ratings, with Farrand named as chairman. This committee initiated the practice of annually reviewing special reports by chief readers on the steps they took to ensure the uniform grading of examination papers. The committee also considered carefully all complaints about grading that were received from teachers. Looking back years later, Farrand said he believed that two principles his committee adopted helped appreciably to improve the grading. One principle was that the chief reader was personally responsible for the work of that particular group of readers; the other was that readers were responsible "for doing justice in every case."[7]

Although grading continued to be based on a scale from 0 to 100, the verbal descriptions of points along the scale underwent various revisions. The practice of referring to certain grades as "passing" or "failing," for example, was abandoned. Grades from 60 to 75 were eventually described as "fair"; those from 50 to 60, "doubtful"; those from 40 to 50, "poor"; and those below 40, "very poor." Over the years colleges learned that applicants who were admitted even though their grades were in the lower ranges of the scale sometimes performed as ably as college students who had entered with higher grades.

Through an arrangement with the College Board, in 1901 Ginn and Company began to publish annually copies of previously administered examinations. It was a profitable arrangement because hundreds of teachers apparently considered it advantageous to maintain a file of past examinations. These examinations together with the definitions of requirements served as primary resources for many teachers as they planned and conducted their courses. In his autobiography James B. Conant, who experienced College Board examinations firsthand as a student, included these observations:

> The hallmark [of the examinations] was their relation to a carefully prescribed area of content. The student, of course, heard nothing about definitions of requirements or syllabi. But he was fully conscious of the existence of a body of knowledge; its boundaries, he knew, set limits to what he might find on the examination paper. His acquaintance with the content of his field was largely a result of his having pored over old examination papers. A bound copy of those given in previous years in each subject was essential as a textbook (though there was only one copy, carefully guarded by the teacher). Just how one should answer each question was gone over in some detail. Toward the end of the year, the class was given a full trial examination. One of the old examination papers was assigned to each student; bluebooks were distributed, and all concerned wrote as though their entry into college really depended on how they answered the half-dozen or so questions.[8]

Among the candidates who performed poorly on the examinations each year were those whose schools were unwilling to recommend them for admission by certificate, so that taking the examinations was a last resort. A source of embarrassment to their teachers and schools, they stimulated the Board to initiate the practice of including on the grade report the symbol *R* if the teacher recommended that the student take a particular examination, the symbol *C* if the teacher was willing only to give his or her consent, and the symbol *X* if the teacher was unable or unwilling to make any such recommendations. This practice was a painful reminder to Fiske and Butler that admission by certificate not only continued to be popular but that many colleges and schools clearly favored it over admission by examination.

In 1902 a number of New England colleges established what they called the New England Certificate Board. The purpose of this board was to evaluate and in effect certify the schools that were entitled in turn to certify students for college admission. Its system for evaluating schools did not involve on-site inspections, whether by faculty members, as in the case of the University of Michigan, or by state officials. Member institutions of the New England Certificate Board arranged instead to pool the information they had about the college performance of students from particular schools. Schools whose records were good in this regard were authorized to certify students for college admission.[9]

The New England Certificate Board provided colleges in New England with an alternative to the College Board and its system of entrance examinations. Many colleges joined the new board; it offered them a means of handling admissions that seemed preferable to them for reasons of both self-interest and educational soundness.

The activities of the New England Certificate Board attracted the attention of colleges that were members of the Middle States Association. In 1907 they initiated steps to establish a comparable board. One of the specified conditions was that it would not come into official existence until at least 15 colleges agreed to join; this condition turned out to be a stumbling block. Within two years 13 colleges signed up, and a fourteenth college signed up a year later. With only one more college needed, matters took a frustrating turn; a fifteenth college signaled its intention to join, but one of the colleges already in the group decided at about the same time to withdraw. The magic number was not attained, and interest in the plan eventually petered out.[10] Perhaps the missing ingredient was Nicholas "Miraculous" Butler.

The idea of admitting students solely on the basis of certificates eventually lost its appeal when colleges decided they had more to gain by making their own decisions about whom to admit or reject than they did by allowing certain schools to make such decisions for them. But this did not happen until the pool of potential college applicants grew considerably larger. In the first decade of the College Board Butler did not take lightly the competitive threat the New England Certificate Board presented. As late as 1909 he commented in a note to Fiske that "the battle between the examination and certificate system is going to grow hotter." He suggested to Fiske that the College Board's practice of referring to its own grade reports as "certificates" was unfortunate and that these reports perhaps should be either renamed "credentials" or carefully referred to in the future as "certificates of examination."[11]

For Butler and Fiske another continuing concern was the tendency of colleges, including those that were members of the College Board, to persist in relying to some extent on their own entrance examinations. For almost a decade Columbia, Barnard, and N.Y.U. remained the only institutions that required all their applicants to take the Board's examinations. The result was that although the number of candidates gradually increased—reaching four thousand by 1913—this number was only a tiny fraction of the total number of students who applied to member colleges. One effect of this was that the Board's income from candidate fees repeatedly fell short of meeting expenses; the Board's financial status was a chronic source of concern. On one occasion the Board was saved by a timely grant from the Carnegie Corporation of New York.[12]

In the nation at large an ever more rapid expansion of public secondary education was meanwhile taking place. While only a small percentage of high school graduates were either interested in or prepared for college, college administrators and faculty members were quick to sense that among the swelling numbers of students were some they would dearly like to bring within their walls.

Harvard was not the only institution whose administrators and faculty members reacted this way, but its response to the situation had such a profound influence on the future course of the College Board that it deserves a special place in this narrative.

In 1911 Harvard Dean C. H. Barnwell voiced two serious, interrelated complaints in a speech at a meeting of educators in the South. Complaint number one: "Of 11,500 public and private secondary schools in the United States," he said, "only 30 have sent to Harvard as many as one annually for the past 10 years, and of those 30 all of the 14 public and 10 of the 16 private schools are in the State of Massachusetts. The great majority of students entering the freshman class at Harvard each year come, in fact, from the schools of Middlesex County, in which the college is situated."[13]

Complaint number two followed: "Furthermore, even the students admitted from these few schools that make a business of preparing students for Harvard have not always proved themselves so well qualified as the college authorities might reasonably expect. As a result of constant and systematic cramming for examinations on certain special subjects, many applicants manage to gain admission without having developed any considerable degree of intellectual power."[14]

As its response to these twin complaints Harvard developed what it called its New Plan of admissions. This plan was designed not to replace but to supplement its regular system of admission by examination. The plan had four key features:

1. It was intended only for certain applicants: those who showed an unusual degree of intellectual promise but were not adequately prepared for the full range of prescribed examinations. To apply under the New Plan, applicants were required to secure permission in advance from the College.
2. While the plan involved examinations, these were to be "comprehensive" in nature. There would, for example, be just one examination in English or mathematics rather than a number of separate examinations.
3. Applicants granted permission to use the plan would take examinations in only four subject areas. All applicants would take comprehensive examinations in English and mathematics; they would then elect to take two of the following additional examinations: Latin, French, German, and history.
4. All four examinations would be considered to constitute a single examination for grading purposes; an applicant's performance would be rated as either acceptable or unacceptable.[15]

Behind the plan for using comprehensive examinations was a history of interest in, and experience with, such examinations at Harvard, dating back to Eliot's introduction of the elective system. Eliot, who considered the elective system "one of the best fruits" of his presidency,[16] nevertheless had to face a challenge the system presented – namely, how to measure equitably the achievement of different students whose selection of courses varied, sometimes markedly. While counting each course as worth so many "credits" eventually became the accepted way of dealing with this challenge, Eliot was intrigued by the possibility of examinations that would sweep across broad areas of the curriculum. During his presidency examinations of this type were introduced in Harvard's medical and divinity schools.

When Abbott Lawrence Lowell succeeded Eliot as Harvard's president in 1909, he encouraged the faculty to extend the use of comprehensive examinations to the undergraduate level. One examination, for example, was developed to measure the achievement of students who had elected a variety of courses in history, political science, and economics. Lowell believed that comprehensive examinations would compel each student "to read for himself, instead of absorbing information carefully prepared for him" and "to correlate what he has learned, retaining the substance of it in his mind long enough to produce a permanent impression."[17]

The New Plan was thus of interest to Lowell from a pedagogical as well as an admissions perspective. One year after its introduction at Harvard in 1911 he concluded that the four examinations constituted "not a bad test of the boy's capacity and training."[18] He was also able to report with satisfaction that 39 percent of the New Plan candidates were from outside New England, compared with 15 percent of the remaining applicants, and that students admitted in the new way did better work in their first year than those admitted under the old system.[19]

Harvard's experiment attracted considerable interest. It became a major topic of discussion at meetings of both the New England and the Middle States associations. Leading educators in both schools and colleges expressed their approval of comprehensive examinations that placed less emphasis on memorized knowledge and more on what they referred to as intellectual "power" and subject-matter "mastery."

Members of the New England Association viewed the plan as providing a means of incorporating both school certificates and examinations in college admissions procedures; in 1910 the association had passed a resolution that colleges "adopt a system of tests for admission in which a certificate shall be taken for quantity and an examination shall be held in a limited number of substantial subjects for the quality of school work."[20]

Among those intrigued by the Harvard plan were many persons active and influential in the affairs of the College Board, among them Harvard's own Dean Hurlbut, the representatives of Princeton and Yale, and the ever-present Farrand. When Princeton joined the Board in 1910, the practice began for the representatives of the so-called big three – Harvard, Yale, and Princeton – to confer informally in advance of College Board meetings. Hurlbut had ready allies in his colleagues from the other two institutions as he considered how the scheme initiated by Harvard might be adopted by the Board. All three institutions shared an interest both in expanding their pools of applicants and in moving toward examinations that stressed the ability of students to think for themselves.

In 1914 Hurlbut succeeded Butler as the Board's chairman, replacing his predecessor's somewhat imperious style of leadership with his own more subtle but equally successful brand. There began to take shape a proposal to the Board from Harvard, Yale, and Princeton that must have seemed sweet indeed to Fiske and others concerned about the slow pace of growth in the number of examination candidates. It stipulated that if the Board would undertake to administer a program along the lines of Harvard's New Plan, each of the three institutions would cease to use its own entrance examinations and would use instead the Board's examinations exclusively. In addition, Harvard faculty members would participate in the development of the new comprehensive examinations without any cost to the Board. Also, all three institutions would turn over to the Board the administration of examinations in September to late-applying applicants.

In 1915 the Board voted to introduce its own New Plan of examinations the following year, modeled after Harvard's plan by the same name; preparations were begun to develop the examinations and make the necessary announcements. Ten new committees were appointed to develop comprehensive examinations in English, mathematics, history, ancient languages, modern languages, and science.

The committees coped in a variety of ways with the challenge of asking questions that covered a large segment of the curriculum and that did not presuppose highly prescribed forms of instruction. Unable any longer to assume that all candidates had read and studied the same books, the examiners in English decided that the purpose of their examination would be "to test the ability of the candidate to defend clearly in writing ideas gained both from books and from the life around him, and to read with accuracy and appreciation literature as varied in subject matter and form as that listed under Uniform Entrance Requirements in English." They framed literary questions such as, "Contrast any two poets, or any two poems, that appeal to you strongly but for different reasons." To measure writing ability, they asked for compositions of about four hundred words on such topics as "the surprisingly human characteristics of school teachers."[21]

Examiners in ancient and modern languages selected passages from a variety of sources for candidates to translate into English. Examiners in substantive subjects such as chemistry and mathematics faced the almost impossible task of identifying specific topics that most, if not all, candidates had studied.

In announcing the Board's New Plan, Fiske took pains to describe its various features. He apparently felt stumped when it came to explaining the nature of comprehensive examinations; in his announcement he quoted from a statement sent him at his request by the chairman of Harvard's admissions committee:

> To be most useful the new cooperative papers must be adapted: (1) To such variety of school instruction as exists in the several subjects – that is, they must not prescribe methods, but must recognize the general principle that the schools determine how they teach a subject and that the college tests results or power. (2) To different stages of training in the subjects in which they are set – that is, they must give boys opportunity to show their power, whether they have had the maximum or the minimum amount of training given in school. For example, the papers in French should be so drawn up as to enable a boy who has had only two years of French to show that he has as much command over the language as can be expected from that amount of training; and they must be similarly useful for the boy who has had three or four years of French.[22]

The candidates who took advantage of the Board's New Plan in 1916 numbered 495, of whom 390 were applicants to Harvard or to Radcliffe. The number increased to 752 in 1918 and then jumped one year later to almost 2,000 when four of the women's colleges – Mount Holyoke, Smith, Vassar, and Wellesley – instituted the practice of using the plan for most of their applicants. By 1925 the number climbed to 2,402. Candidates under the Old Plan continued to outnumber New Plan candidates by a considerable margin, however, increasing from 4,952 in 1915 to 17,373 in 1925. Many institutions that did not choose to make formal use of the New Plan nevertheless gave applicants the option of taking the comprehensive examinations in lieu of the restricted ones, and they became far more widely used than the plan itself.

The comprehensive examinations enabled colleges to widen their nets to include applicants from the burgeoning number of public schools that were not guided by the Board's definitions of requirements in organizing their curriculums. At the same time the older examinations continued to appeal to preparatory school teachers who were content to go on grooming their students for admission to prestigious institutions. To such teachers the new comprehensive examinations could present a challenge they did not relish. One Latin teacher is reported to have "exclaimed" when told the comprehensive examination for that subject would make heavy use of sight translation, "But how am I going to know what passage they will choose?"[23]

By continuing to offer the older, restricted examinations along with the newer, comprehensive examinations, the College Board was demonstrating its capacity to take contradictory stances on its curricular impact. On the one hand, its examinations "must be adapted to such variety of school instruction as exists"; on the other hand, the obvious point of definitions of requirements and of examinations based on such definitions was to tell schools what they should teach.

In quantitative terms the Board's program of entrance examinations was small. Its membership, concentrated in the East, did not include all the colleges in that region and included very few colleges in other regions of the country. While candidates came from increasing numbers of schools, and from schools increasingly distant from the Board's New York headquarters, they continued to come in substantial numbers from relatively few Eastern schools, many of which were private. In 1925 the Board's examinations were taken by fewer than 4 percent of the more than half million students who graduated that year from secondary schools.

The Board's small size does not appear to have bothered the representatives of colleges and schools who were active in its governance; their first concern was not so much the Board as it was the Board's relevance to their particular institutions. It did apparently bother Fiske, however, on whose shoulders fell most of the burden of explaining and defending the Board. When the editor of a Swedish educational journal wrote to Fiske in 1925 to inquire about the Board, Fiske dutifully answered his questions with relevant facts about the Board's history and activities. He then appended these personal observations:

> 1. Although the number of colleges vitally concerned in and immediately responsible for the work of the College Entrance Examination Board, compared with the total number of colleges in the United States, is so small as to appear almost negligible, these colleges exercise an influence that is virtually controlling American education.
>
> 2. In consequence of the fact that in the United States there is no other generally recognized agency for defining the requirements in secondary school studies and for interpreting such requirements concretely in terms of written examinations, the influence of the Board is felt in every community of the United States.
>
> 3. The College Entrance Examination Board is the most notable example in the United States, if not in the world, of an educational cooperation of a purely voluntary character involving the participation of a large number of absolutely independent institutions.[24]

Fiske's positive evaluation of the Board's influence and significance was not shared by all educators. "To one who lives west of the Allegheny Mountains," a Chicago-based educational journal observed, "the

College Board is no more than an interesting example of educational history." A high school principal in Lincoln, Nebraska, was more direct; referring to "the hidebound aristocratic colleges Down East," he said he was grateful to be "one thousand physical miles and at least ten thousand professional and educational miles removed from their narrow, pedantic, educational philosophy."[25]

Even farther west was a private school teacher in California whose critical remarks about the Board Fiske included in his *Annual Report* for 1922:

> One can but regret that in practically every preparatory school the examinations of the College Entrance Board have inescapably come to be the sole object of teaching and that the more serious and vital business of educating is either made a secondary consideration or entirely lost sight of in the impression of getting boys purposely crammed for the annual ordeals. These examinations now actually dominate, control, and color the entire policy and practice of the classroom; they prescribe and define subject and treatment; they dictate selection and emphasis. Further, they have come, rightly or wrongly, to be at once the despot and headsman professionally of the teacher. Slight chance for continued professional service has that teacher who fails to "get results" in the "College Boards," valuable and inspiring as his instruction may otherwise be.[26]

That it was decidedly wrong for colleges in general and the College Board in particular to reign despotically over the secondary school curriculum was the view of a great many school superintendents, principals, and professors of education. In 1918 the Commission on the Reorganization of Secondary Education of the National Education Association recommended that educational programs be guided by what were named the Cardinal Principles. Stressed were values of home, health, vocation, citizenship, leisure, and ethical character; academic pursuits were reduced to the status of "the command of fundamental processes." From the days when the NEA had sponsored the Committee of Ten, the association and the nation had turned many degrees away from the educational values championed by the presidents and the faculty members of prestigious universities.

In such a climate the question of the Board's influence on the school curriculum became both more complex and more sensitive than it was when raising the standards of secondary school instruction was assumed and proclaimed by Butler to be one of the Board's major functions. Fiske took pains to refer discreetly to actions the Board took that might be construed as dictating to the schools. When the Board published a pamphlet by the teachers who graded the comprehensive examination in English, suggesting how schools might go about preparing students for the examination, Fiske was careful to explain that the pamphlet was "not intended to trespass upon the domain of the teacher and textbook."[27]

On 6 November 1925 the Board celebrated its first quarter century at a gala dinner in New York City. Present were many of those who had played prominent roles in the Board, including Butler himself, Henry S. Pritchett, president of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, and Farrand. The occasion was marked by many fine words about the past glories and the future promise of the Board. Farrand, however, took special note of the Board's critics. He divided them into two groups, those who complained that the standards set by the Board's examinations were unreasonable and those who claimed that any sort of entrance examination was unreasonable. He said his reply to the first group was that the Board actually had no standards of its own, that it was simply the instrument for bringing together "the most representative teachers the Board was able to collect" for the purpose of framing requirements, preparing examination papers, and interpreting results. He said his reply to the second group was that a fair examination was not a hindrance to good teaching. "It does restrict undue freedom, and it is a check on vagaries, but at the same time it is an incentive to thoroughness, and with a good teacher the examination is an incident rather than an end."[28]

Farrand also ventured three "conclusions" regarding the significance of the Board. (1) He believed the Board deserved credit for "securing cooperative action by colleges, schools, and individuals." (2) He maintained that the Board served American education well by providing standards of attainment for schools and admissions standards for colleges. (3) He commended the Board for its ability and willingness to change its ways when change was called for.[29] He had no way of knowing how radically the Board would change its ways in the next 25 years.

3. Enter the Psychologists: *The Scholastic Aptitude Test*

Circumstances during and following World War I conspired to alter significantly the College Board's destiny. The continued explosive growth of public high schools – the number of graduates more than doubled from 240,000 in 1915 to 528,000 in 1925 – created an ever-larger pool of college applicants. Public secondary education increasingly marched to the drums of its own leaders, however, forcing colleges to bend their admissions requirements and strategies to the realities of what schools chose to teach. The Board's economic health was strained by the effects of the Great Depression. Last, but not least, the Board was affected by the great strides that psychologists took in gaining acceptance and use of the tests they developed for measuring mental abilities.

It was a heady experience for a number of psychologists not only to play pivotal roles in the testing and classification of soldiers, which took place during the war on an unprecedented scale, but to find after the war that their tests captured the fancy of many of their fellow Americans. Interest ran high in education as well as in government, industry, and other sectors. The United States commissioner of education estimated in 1920 that 200 colleges and universities were engaged in administering the Army Alpha Test or comparable tests to their students.[1] The interest in many cases centered on the usefulness of the tests for admissions.

Many institutions that were members of the College Board became involved in this activity, including Brown, Columbia, Cornell, Goucher, Rutgers, Smith, and Yale. Columbia University was particularly fortunate in having on the faculty of Teachers College Edward L. Thorndike, the generally acknowledged leader of the testing movement in the United States. Ben D. Wood, the director of Columbia's Bureau of Collegiate Educational Research and a leader in his own right, was also a valuable resource. Wood was the founder of the Cooperative Test Service, an agency sponsored by the American Council on Education with the financial support of the General Education Board, an early foundation formed by John D. Rockefeller.

In 1918 Columbia used the Thorndike Tests for Mental Alertness in admitting students to its Army Training Corps. The results were so satisfactory that a modified version of the tests was used the following year for the admission of regular students. The purpose was similar to that behind Harvard's introduction of its New Plan of comprehensive examinations almost a decade earlier—to draw from a wider pool of applicants—and the results were also similar. When the test was available as an option for applicants, the total number of applications increased by 28 percent and the number of applications received from applicants outside New York by 73 percent. Furthermore, students who were admitted on the basis of the new test subsequently performed as well in college courses as did those who had taken College Board examinations.[2]

Psychologists had more in their quivers than the tests they devised. They were armed with statistical methods for determining how well their tests functioned as measures of current ability and as predictors of future performance. They could estimate a test's *reliability*—how consistently it would yield the same scores if students were to take the same test or an equivalent test numerous times. They could also estimate a test's *validity*—the degree to which the scores it yielded were consistent with measures of the quality it was designed to measure or to predict, such as the grades awarded by college teachers in certain courses or the average of grades awarded by a number of different teachers.

In addition they were able to determine the extent to which the validity of a test, measured in statistical terms, was limited by its reliability. Since perfect reliability, whether of test scores or of criterion measures used to measure validity, was unattainable in situations of any complexity, the goal that psychologists came to set for themselves was to achieve the highest possible reliability and the highest possible validity, and measures thus achieved became their standard.

Soon after World War I representatives of Board member institutions began to talk among themselves at Board meetings about their interest in and use of tests commonly referred to as intelligence tests. In 1919 Fiske included in his *Annual Report* the following comments under the heading Comprehensive Examinations as Intelligence Tests:

> It should be the purpose of the College Entrance Examination Board not only to ascertain whether the candidates have acquired the information and methods of thought necessary for successful work in college, but also to determine whether they possess certain important intellectual qualities which are sometimes described as alertness, power, and endurance, although these terms would seem to indicate excellencies of the body rather than of the mind. Up to the present time the Board's endeavors in this direction are

> exhibited most conspicuously in the comprehensive examinations. If these examinations continue to respond to the demands of the times, they should eventually become the best possible tests combining the necessary elements of an informational and of mental, or psychological, character.[3]

Fiske was probably sensing accurately that the intelligence tests created by psychologists were so unfamiliar to many involved in the Board, and so alien to the basic format of the College Board's examinations program, that their adoption by the Board, if it was to occur at all, would be a long and slow process. He was also a vigorous champion of the Board's use of written examinations as a means of sustaining an emphasis on writing in the schools, and this may have made him personally wary about any form of testing that did not involve student writing.

A commission was quietly appointed in 1920 to investigate the possible use by the Board of intelligence tests. Composed of two headmasters, one of whom served as chairman, and two college professors, it was singularly inactive. Headmasters of preparatory schools active in the Board were much less inclined than were the college representatives to sense that their institutions had something to gain from using the new tests. The tests probably seemed to the headmasters to be either irrelevant or a vague threat to their major interests.

Two years later, in 1922, the Board voted to authorize Dean Howard McClenahan of Princeton, its then chairman, to appoint a new commission that would explicitly be charged with considering the desirability and the feasibility of including intelligence tests in the Board's program. While perfectly willing to do so, McClenahan decided to hold off when psychologists he consulted advised him to wait until a stronger case could be mounted.[4]

The pace picked up in 1924. President Mary E. Woolley of Mount Holyoke, McClenahan's successor as chairman, appointed a commission composed of two college presidents, four college deans, and a college professor, possibly the only instance in the Board's history of an appointed group that did not include one or more secondary school representatives. Within a year Fiske reported that the commission was ready with a recommendation that the Board "enter into an agreement with the National Council or some other qualified agency whereby there should be prepared each year for the use of the Board psychological tests suitable for candidates wishing to enter colleges represented on the Board." This recommendation was approved by the full Board at its meeting in November 1924.[5]

The next step was the appointment by Chairman Woolley of a three-person committee of experts in the field to develop a plan for preparing and administering tests of the new type. Selected to chair the committee was Carl C. Brigham, a Princeton professor of psychology. A second member of the committee was Henry T. Moore, a Dartmouth psychology professor; the third member was Robert M. Yerkes, a Yale psychology professor, who had served as chairman of the Committee for Classification of Personnel in the Army, the group responsible for developing the Army Alpha Test and also its companion test, the Army Beta Test, intended for recruits unable to read English.

In Brigham the College Board found a man whose credentials, both personal and professional, were ideal for the task not only of designing a test useful to admissions officers but of bringing skeptical headmasters and college presidents around to the idea of accepting the test. His New England lineage, Princeton affiliation, and manner of speech and dress all helped to make him an accepted member of "the club." Although a determined man with strong opinions, he was careful not to overstate the case for tests, and he furthermore respected the educational function served by the Board's existing examinations.

Brigham acquired his interest in psychology during his Princeton undergraduate years, and he pursued his interest in mental testing as a doctoral candidate at the same institution. He studied with special interest the work of Alfred Binet in France, which led to Binet's creation of the concept of "mental age" and to his collaboration with Théodore Simon in developing tests to measure the "intelligence quotient," or "IQ," of French pupils. Soon after joining the Princeton faculty, Brigham left to join Yerkes and other psychologists engaged in creating the Army Alpha Test and Beta Test. On his return to Princeton after the war he threw himself wholeheartedly into thinking up questions of the types used in intelligence tests and trying them out on students both at Princeton and at the Cooper Union Institute of Technology in New York City. While many psychologists found this kind of work congenial and stimulating, for Brigham it became a passion.

The test eventually devised consisted of nine subtests labeled Definitions, Arithmetical Problems, Classification, Artificial Language, Antonyms, Number Series, Analogies, Logical Inference, and Paragraph Reading.

The committee composed a lengthy manual for the guidance of college admissions officers. In the manual they explained their reasons for calling it a test of scholastic aptitude. While acknowledging its kinship to tests variously called psychological tests, mental ability tests, and intelligence tests, they noted that whether or not such tests measured intelligence was elusive, whereas the connection between test scores and subsequent academic grades could be determined empirically. They intended the term *scholastic aptitude* to refer to nothing more than the "tendency for individual differences in scores to be associated positively with individual differences in subsequent academic attainment."[6]

The manual went on to caution readers that the new test would not predict subsequent academic performance of students with certainty: "The present state of all efforts of men to measure or in any way estimate the worth of other men, . . . or to reckon their potential possibilities does not warrant any certainty of prediction." The manual further declared that "to place too great emphasis on test scores is as dangerous as the failure properly to evaluate any score or rank in conjunction with other measures and estimates which it supplements." It was claimed for the test only that it would provide relevant information to supplement the information provided by school records, teacher recommendations, and College Board examinations.

Finally, the manual provided background on the history of the testing movement, the reasons colleges were finding it increasingly important to admit only those applicants who showed academic promise, and the various ways tests could be used to place students in appropriate courses or sections of courses.

The Board voted in 1925 to administer the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) for the first time the following year during the June week of examinations. More than 8,000 candidates turned up to take the test, almost all of them applicants to Harvard, Yale, Princeton, Pennsylvania, Smith, Vassar, or Wellesley. Harvard chose to limit its use of the SAT to scholarship applicants and required them also to take the Board's examinations under the New Plan. Other institutions required all their applicants to take the SAT, and most if not all required them to take College Board examinations as well. Since the total number of candidates who took these examinations was close to 22,000, the SAT was taken by more than a third of all candidates in its first year. It was obviously off to a promising start.

An odd-looking scale, from 200 to 800, was adopted for reporting scores. One reason for choosing this scale was to let 500 serve as a convenient point to represent the average or mean score of all candidates and to let 100 conveniently represent one standard deviation. Practically speaking, all scores would therefore fall between 200 and 800—three standard deviations below and three standard deviations above the mean. Another reason was to avoid any confusion between SAT scores – raw scores converted to standard scores – and the grades on College Board examinations. These grades, from 1 to 100, not only derived their meaning from the standards applied, and the judgments made, by readers but were often misinterpreted in various ways. A grade of 60, for example, was sometimes considered to mean that the student had mastered 60 percent of the material covered by the examination. The significant difference between SAT scores and examination grades was that the former indicated where students stood relative to others in a particular group and the latter indicated where they stood relative to standards set by the chief readers.

Along with other psychologists at the time, Brigham was interested in whether there was a unitary, general trait measured by such tests or whether there were two or more separate, independent traits. He therefore analyzed the extent to which the scores of students on each subtest were consistent with their scores on other subtests; a high consistency of scores on all subtests would suggest a unitary trait, a low consistency the possible presence of separate traits. He found that while students tended to get comparable scores on seven of the subtests, their scores on these subtests bore little or no relationship to their scores on the remaining two subtests. On the other hand, the performance of students on these two – Arithmetical Problems and Number Series – tended to be highly consistent. He therefore set out to, in effect, "purify" the test, eventually dividing it into two separate tests, forerunners of what were later called the verbal and the mathematical sections of the SAT.

Scores on the SAT were disclosed only to colleges to which students applied. Because of the possibilities of misinterpretation, it was not considered responsible to release them either to candidates or to secondary school officials and teachers. This well-intentioned secrecy also applied to the contents of the test; test questions were not published after the test was administered, as in the case of the written examinations, and very little information was disseminated about their nature. It was considered necessary, if the SAT was to function effectively, to standardize all the conditions that might affect test performance other than the aptitude the test was designed to measure. This included holding as constant as possible the familiarity with the test of candidates, their teachers, and others in a position to influence their performance.

The SAT had so many features that were new to those active in the Board – particularly to the secondary school headmasters and principals, who were less likely than their college-level colleagues to be acquainted with psychologists – that it was probably difficult for them to see how it fitted into the Board's program. Fiske was apparently not too sure himself. In his 1927 *Annual Report* as secretary, he included two separate sections, one on the College Entrance Examination Board as an Agency for Educational Progress and the other on the SAT. While he struck a positive chord in both sections, he seemed to be on much firmer ground in dealing with the first topic.

In the first section he extolled the contributions the Board had made, and was continuing to make, to American education. He asserted that during the preceding 25 years of its existence, the Board had done more than any other single agency in the United States to establish substantial and reasonable standards in the secondary schools and to standardize and simplify the requirements for admission to college.

Fiske cited in particular the roles played by college and school teachers in framing the Board's definitions of requirements, preparing its examinations, reading and grading answer papers, and serving on committees charged with formulating administrative policies:

> The definitions of the Board's requirements and specimen copies of its examinations papers find their way into every community of the United States. The deliberations of the Board's committees and commissions are followed with interest by progressive educators everywhere. On a number of occasions the Secretary has received from associations of teachers and from individual colleges and schools that have had no previous contact with the Board letters requesting the assistance of the Board in obtaining fuller recognition for some study or in bringing about some modification of present methods of teaching it.[7]

In contrast his remarks about the SAT were so general as to sound vacuous. He said the SAT was "one of the most important and interesting undertakings of the Board," that through it the Board expected "to make a permanent contribution of the highest importance to educational progress," and that it "deserved the cordial support of every educational institution and organization in the United States."[8]

Most educators probably assumed that the SAT and the Board's traditional program were worlds apart and served to fulfill totally different purposes. The SAT was an invention of psychologists and statisticians, and the idea of "aptitude" had an aura about it of mystery if not magic for those not trained in these fields. As savvy a man as Harvard's Conant confessed in later years that he believed for some time that the SAT measured an innate disposition of some sort, despite

Brigham's assertions to the contrary.[9] The secrecy surrounding the test, the esoteric terms associated with it, and the lack of involvement of other than psychologists in its creation and evolution probably conspired to give teachers, scholars, and educators generally the impression that the test was not connected in any substantial way with matters of central interest and concern to them.

If this was the general impression, developments soon proved it to be an illusion. One development, stimulated by the attention focused on the ability of the SAT to predict applicants' college grades, was a growing interest in, and emphasis on, the power of the Board's traditional examinations to make comparable predictions. It became a concern among admissions officers when they found that the grades on these examinations functioned less effectively in this respect than did SAT scores. As early as 1920 Wood reported the following correlations based on results at Columbia:[10]

College entrance examinations and college record	.43
Secondary school record and college record	.45
Regents examinations and college record	.51
Psychological examinations and college record	.59

It was quickly apparent that one of the problems was the limited reliability of the examination grades. In a measurement sense the written examinations suffered from two major handicaps in comparison with the SAT: they asked fewer questions – a smaller "sample" of student behavior – and they were graded by readers whose judgments were never in complete accord. The examinations came under a cloud of doubt about a certain virtue that they had not been asked to exhibit heretofore. Demands were voiced that their "prognostic value" be increased.

But equally dark clouds of other kinds were also forming and filling the sky above the written examinations. Not only were they losing favor among college admissions officers because of their defects as predictive devices; as colleges felt the pinch of the Great Depression, their interest in insisting on the preparation standards the examinations represented gave way to finding applicants whose parents were able to foot the bill.

The examinations and the definitions on which they were based were also coming in for increasing fire from secondary school officials and spokesmen. It was a period when entrance requirements that entailed intensive, prescribed academic preparation were vigorously opposed both by the public school establishment and by champions of progressive schools. Professors of education demanded of public schools that they teach only those subjects that had "social utility"; every academic subject, no matter how entrenched in the curriculum, was subjected to a stern analysis of its relevance to the lives of students in a democratic society. Within some progressive schools, on the other hand, the emphasis was placed on learning that was spontaneous and joyful. Whatever the merits were of either the social utility or the progressive school of thought, to the adherents of each school the College Board prescriptions tended to be viewed as unwarranted and unwelcome.

The criticisms obviously stung Fiske. He felt called upon to write a statement about the Board's purposes for general circulation and included excerpts from it in his *Annual Report* for 1933. In a section headed Is the Board's Influence Harmful to the Secondary Schools? he quoted from the statement his comment that "within the last year or two there have been many attacks upon the College Entrance Examination Board. In fact, at the present time the favorite topic for an address or for discussion at an educational convention seems to be the harmful influence of the Board's examinations upon the activities of the secondary schools."[11]

In his defense of the Board Fiske cited two principles that he believed guided the Board's work in a fundamental way. The first was that "the solution of educational problems should be sought through the voluntary cooperation of the educational institutions and associations whose interests are vitally concerned." The second was that "examinations conducted by an agency external to the school and independent of any local or private influence are not only the best measures of a pupil's attainment but also instruments of great value for education."[12]

Adding to Fiske's woes was the practice of some Board members of excusing from examinations applicants with unusually strong school records and recommendations. While this enabled an institution to fish for applicants in a larger pool, it reduced the number of fee-paying candidates, and Fiske inveighed vigorously if futilely against the practice.[13]

From 1926 to 1935 the number of candidates who took the written examinations declined precipitously from over 22,000 to fewer than 14,000. In the same period the number who took the SAT increased from 8,040 to 9,437. Moreover, 3,000 SAT candidates in 1935 did not take any of the Board's written examinations; some colleges instituted the practice of requiring only the SAT. The older program was on a downhill slide; the SAT was helping to keep the Board alive.

In 1930 Brigham joined Fiske as a salaried staff member of the

Board with the title of associate secretary. Remaining as a professor of psychology at Princeton, he set up a College Board research office in Princeton. He also continued to serve as chairman of the Commission on Scholastic Aptitude Tests, which had been appointed to oversee work related to the tests. His interest in the Board embraced both the SAT and its older program of written examinations. Asked by the Executive Committee to recommend ways of increasing the prognostic value of the Board's examinations, Brigham said the request raised fundamental questions about the Board's "conflicting purposes, ideas, and ideals":

> At the outset everyone must realize that the College Entrance Examination Board has two purposes, at least partially incompatible with each other. Failure to recognize the essentially dualistic nature of the Board will result in disastrous consequences. A solution reached with one or the other purpose in mind will seem like a good solution, but the situation demands the perhaps impossible resolution of two problems simultaneously and not either one alone. The present feeling of uneasiness on the part of the Board is symptomatic of its inherently conflicting aims. . . . The conflicting motives would be most easily brought to light by asking the Board to decide whether its examinations should measure *institutions* or *individuals*. The Board's present high position in the educational world is the direct result of its efficacy as a form of *institutional* control. Its chief weakness lies in its somewhat inadequate descriptions of individuals seeking admission to college.[14]

Brigham was apparently convinced that it was possible to increase the reliability of the Board's written examinations. He believed, however, that this would require a major research effort, supported by ample funds. He saw little prospect of such funds becoming available as long as the Board persisted in offering as many as 45 different examinations, including some of the older, restricted type and others of the newer, comprehensive type. "It is apparent," he said in 1934, "that the Board cannot improve its important examinations and simultaneously maintain such a complicated structure." The solution he proposed centered on the restricted examinations that were based on narrow segments of the curriculum and that relatively few candidates elected to take. Such examinations, he thought, might be either withdrawn completely or converted to objective, multiple-choice tests. He estimated that "any examining cost may be cut in half by the use of objective tests."[15]

If Brigham was thus willing to jettison some of the Board's written examinations, he was insistent that the Board needed to continue offering the examinations he characterized as its "important" ones.

These were the comprehensive written examinations that were elected by substantial numbers of candidates. Brigham perceived such examinations – in English, foreign languages, history, mathematics, and science – to serve more than a measuring function; their significance, he believed, lay as much in their power to influence curriculum content and standards as in their power to measure or predict student achievement. He believed that neither the costs involved in administering these examinations nor their measurement limitations constituted adequate grounds for withdrawing them from the Board's program:

> Decisions concerning the maintenance of the existing structure of examinations cannot be based on economic considerations entirely, because of the Board's prestige and because of the institutional aspect of its examinations. The situation is analogous to that confronting the management of a resort hotel with a steadily decreasing patronage. It is impossible to cut down the essential services and it is necessary to maintain certain expensive accessory services to attract guests.[16]

Both the institutional and the measurement aspects of the Board's examinations underwent intensive study during the late twenties and early thirties by a series of Board-appointed commissions that dealt eventually with every subject examined by the Board. Each of these commissions became embroiled in issues with respect to its particular segment of the curriculum that were difficult to resolve because of pronounced differences of opinion among teachers and concerned others. A lively issue for most commissions was the extent to which subjects should be taught and tested as discrete units – as "small packages," to use Brigham's phrase – or in some integrated, "large package" fashion. The Commission on History, for example, favored preparation in European history, American history from its dawn to the present, and the social sciences, whereas many teachers wanted to continue teaching ancient history, English history, segments of American history, and courses with such names as civics, citizenship, and problems of democracy. Similarly, the Commission on Science leaned toward integrated courses in the physical sciences and the biological sciences, but this did not sit well with many teachers of botany, chemistry, physics, and zoology.

In general the commissions, composed mainly of distinguished college professors although typically including at least one private school and one public school teacher, appear to have been more concerned about leading the secondary school curriculum in directions they valued than in strengthening the measurement qualities of the Board's examinations. They also appear to have been more in touch with the curriculums of schools with strong academic programs, many of them private, than with those of the much greater number of below average, average, or above average high schools. The high school representative on the Commission on History, for example, concluded that the recommendations of that commission were so unrealistic that he refused to support them, choosing instead to write his own minority report.[17]

Recommendations of the various commissions, while warmly welcomed by some teachers, were a source of annoyance if not outrage in other quarters. It seems likely that their agendas sometimes included matters that only those intimately involved with the subjects they were dealing with understood with any clarity. One mathematician active at the time recalled years later that he and his colleagues admired the Commission on Mathematics for trying to maintain a four-year program of mathematics in the schools despite the efforts of some educators to reduce the teaching of mathematics to skills necessary in daily life.

Contention within the Board about its priorities and future course led the Executive Committee in 1933 to appoint the Subcommittee on Questions of Policy. Adam Leroy Jones, a member of the Columbia faculty who had been serving for many years as director of admissions for the entire university, was named the chairman. Three other college representatives and the heads of four secondary schools served as members of the subcommittee.

In its final report, issued in the spring of 1934 and included in that year's *Annual Report,* the subcommittee focused its attention on the changes taking place in the secondary school curriculum:

> Interesting and very promising experiments are in progress in secondary education today involving new methods and approaches to the whole curriculum, a changing emphasis in fields of study, and a new organization of work in many subjects, especially in the social studies and natural sciences. The Board should be ready to cooperate with the secondary schools and the colleges in this period of important changes in secondary school instruction.[18]

The subcommittee arrived at two major recommendations. The first was that "the existing definitions of requirements be liberally interpreted as indicating in a general way the nature and extent of preparation considered necessary and not as prescribing any definite form of instruction, method of preparation, or teaching technique." The second was that the examiners be instructed to prepare examinations designed "to describe the individual candidate with the smallest possible error of measurement."[19]

These recommendations were approved by the Committee of Review, the Executive Committee, and by the full Board in November 1934. While there were no dissenting votes, Fuess reports in his history that "there was an undercurrent of opposition quite evident in the low murmurs of those who did not care to expose themselves to the perils of argument."[20] Although Fuess does not identify the murmurers, it is reasonable to suppose that at least some of them were secondary school headmasters. At another point in his book he comments about the attitude of distrust of "certain New England headmasters" toward tests of the new type and of their "scornful references" at annual meetings of the Headmasters' Association to the "esoteric jargon of [test] experts."[21] That schoolmen may have been reluctant to speak up is understandable in view of their minority status as members of the Board. The Board was rather conspicuously under the control of college representatives, particularly those of Harvard, Yale, and Princeton.

To Fiske the recommendations of the subcommittee marked "an epoch" in the Board's evolution.[22] The recommendations do leave little doubt that the Board's leaders were convinced of the need both to reduce the impact of the examination program on the curriculum and to increase the power of the examinations to measure accurately.

The recommendation with respect to the influence of definitions of requirements clearly left room for them to exercise some kind and amount of influence, however; there would be no point to them if they were expected to be empty of influence. The subcommittee distinguished in its report between those definitions that specified "the subject matter in very great detail" and other definitions that were much more general. The subcommittee referred favorably, for example, to the definitions of requirements in comprehensive English, which it said "simply points out the objective and gives schools complete freedom in working out the method," and to the modern foreign language definition, which "describes certain suggested means of preparation" and "in no way dictates the form of classroom instruction."[23]

To Brigham, convinced of the dualistic nature of the Board, the definitions continued to play a highly significant role. He suggested that if certain schools wished to organize their subject matter in ways contrary to the Board's definitions, it should be possible for them to work out special arrangements with colleges, thus releasing the Board "from the charge of overprescribing the secondary curriculum."[24]

Brigham threw himself into the task of improving the examinations as measuring devices. In 1934 he was joined in the task by John M.

Stalnaker, a University of Chicago psychologist, who was appointed consultant examiner. While it was possible to report some progress, the disagreement that persisted among readers and the relatively small number of ratings involved in reading the answers to even a long examination precluded reliability coefficients as high as those attained by the SAT.

Commissions of teachers continued to perform their function of recommending broad directions for the teaching of mathematics, history, and other subjects. Teachers also continued to serve as examiners and readers. When Fiske retired in 1936, he made a special point of recognizing the extraordinary services rendered the Board by the hundreds of teachers in colleges and schools who had served in these capacities. Many were recognized as authorities in their fields – 20 were members of the National Academy of Sciences – and some went on to important positions of leadership. He cited with particular pride President Isaiah Bowman of Johns Hopkins, President William Wistar Comfort of Haverford, President Karl Taylor Compton of M.I.T., President James B. Conant of Harvard, President Harvey N. Davis of Stevens Institute, and President William Allan Neilson of Smith.[25]

But the Board's ties with teachers were loosening, and its involvements in curriculum issues were growing less significant as the number of candidates for written examinations continued to shrink. The bright star for the Board was the Scholastic Aptitude Test, a test invented and improved upon by Brigham, which college admissions officers eagerly adopted as a means of catching tastier fish in a larger pond, while at the same time escaping from bothersome controversy surrounding the Board's older program of entrance examinations.

4. A Clean Sweep for Objective Tests: Creation of Educational Testing Service

During the years Brigham worked with colleagues to refine the Scholastic Aptitude Test, other psychologists were busy developing objective tests to measure the knowledge students acquired in specific school subjects. How such tests – called Achievement Tests – entered the College Board's program, displaced the older written examinations entirely, and figured in the Board's abandonment of its role as a curriculum standard bearer is a story with many interwoven strands.

Some strands were very broad – the rush toward universal secondary education, the entry of the United States into World War II, and the momentum of the testing movement in this country. Other, narrower strands involved particular educational institutions, notably the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, the American Council on Education, and Harvard University. Two large-scale educational studies constituted still additional strands. And finally, of course, there was the cast of characters, including a few persons around whom the story will revolve.

To start, there was William S. Learned, a staff member of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. After completing a doctorate in education at Harvard and joining the foundation, Learned energetically devoted himself to exploring the possibilities of educational reform. He achieved recognition as a speaker and a writer with interesting ideas. In 1927 he spoke at a meeting of the Middle States Association about impressions he had formed during a recent trip to England and the European continent. While attending the meeting, he listened with interest to a speech by James N. Rule, deputy superintendent of public instruction in Pennsylvania, whose topic was the effect on instruction of the rapidly rising enrollments in high schools and colleges. Rule's concern was not so much the increased number of students but the extraordinary differences among them in ability, preparation, and interests – differences that were considerably complicating the planning of suitable instructional programs.[1]

Stimulated by the speech, Learned sought out Rule and proposed they work together in designing a full-scale study that would shed light on the question of student variability. The result was the so-called Pennsylvania Study, jointly sponsored by the Pennsylvania Department of Public Education and the Association of Pennsylvania College Presidents and funded by the Carnegie Foundation.

A specific purpose of the study was "to determine the role and value of the College Board examinations as to the best methods of selecting secondary students for admission to the freshman classes of Pennsylvania colleges."[2] The study made extensive use of objective tests – both Achievement Tests in a wide range of subjects and tests of general mental ability. To supply the tests, Learned relied on Ben D. Wood and his Cooperative Test Service.

Tests were administered in 1928 to a large population of high school seniors and college seniors; two years later many of the same students were retested as college sophomores and four years later as college seniors. Results were reported as the study progressed, although a final report by Learned and Wood, "The Student and His Knowledge," was not published until 1938.[3] A finding that attracted considerable attention was the remarkable overlap in the test performance of students at different levels. For example, 22 percent of the high school seniors scored higher than the average college sophomore, and 10 percent scored higher than the average college senior. To Learned and Wood the study demonstrated clearly the necessity of tracking carefully the educational growth of individual students and the usefulness in this regard of standardized tests.

The study helped to publicize the use of Achievement Tests; by 1930 it was reported that Wood's Cooperative Test Service had sold more than 300,000 tests.[4] It also helped to further persuade Learned and Wood that the written examinations of the College Board were of questionable value. In an article in the January 1933 issue of *The Educational Record* titled "Admission to College," Learned began by commending the Board for "pushing the discursive written examination to the extreme limit of its technical possibilities." He concluded, however, that in the process "the inevitable shortcomings of this type of examination" had been clearly disclosed. "The defects are inherent," he wrote. "The same error of sampling in compiling the questions and the unavoidable variability in interpreting the answers are everywhere evident even under the best of conditions." By way of contrast he called attention to the tests available through the Cooperative Test Service. He said they not only gave reliable scores but covered a subject field so completely that they functioned like "gauges on a reservoir."[5]

This did not sit well with Brigham. In the Board's *Annual Report* for

1933 he commented sharply about "objective testers" in a rather transparent reference to Learned and Wood:

> The objective testers have plunged in with the individual rather than the institutional point of view. Questions of content of the curriculum, or the effect of such examinations on the curriculum have not been raised, or, if raised, have been regarded as heretical. . . . The objective test movement is founded on a sound principle of a minimum of error in the assigning of a grade to an individual. This decent notion has been expanded into an attack on every subjective method of rating, and a defense of every objective trick in rating, until the crusader spirit has converted good devices for measuring into a prescription of what should be measured. Therefore, beginning without any notions of definitions of requirement, the new testers have really written requirements which are in fact whatever their tests may happen to measure. The movement has created new dogmas as obstinately defended as the old, and has missed the virility of a frankly experimental attack.[6]

Next it was Wood's turn. In a speech following his election as director of the Educational Records Bureau, he spoke of the great progress that objective testing had made. He expressed appreciation for the technical advances made at the Universities of Iowa, Minnesota, Ohio, and Wisconsin and also for the support provided the Cooperative Test Service by the American Council on Education and the General Education Board. Turning to the purposes of testing, he insisted, first, that it was "not to enforce arbitrary curricular prescriptions regardless of the interests and needs of individual students" or "to impose arbitrary or uniform standards on heterogeneous masses of students regardless of their capacities and ultimate places of service in society":

> The principal and basic purpose of examining is to help the school ascertain in meaningful terms the achievements, effective interests, and capacities of individual pupils in order that the schools may more surely lead them to their most effective self-realization in the life which they are to live. More particularly, the purpose is to help schools find and meet the needs of individuals in a complex and changing society.[7]

Brigham carried on the argument. In the January 1934 issue of *The Educational Record,* he first chided Learned for his seemingly favorable remarks a few years back about the role played by examinations in England. He quoted Learned as saying that examinations served for the English "an integral part of their educational system." Brigham then declared that the attitude toward examinations at Princeton, and at many other colleges, was "essentially the English attitude." Furthermore, he asserted, many schools were in substantial agreement. While it was true, he said, that smaller errors of measurement were needed, "we cannot sacrifice other aspects of the examinations to the purely placement function." He described the methods used at Princeton and Yale to predict the college grades of applicants, referring to them as "betting systems" that were useful but never precise, and placed them in the following perspective:

> Both betting systems work well without reference to the actual grades in the subject examinations of the College Board, but both are in fact based on a system of secondary education designed to meet the definitions of requirement of the College Board. Neither system would work in a vacuum and it is foolish to argue that because one's multiple correlations are not improved much by adding in the final marks, one therefore does not need the marks. The essential point is that these apparently independent results are obtained within a framework defined by the Board and that they are largely dependent on the framework. . . . What is needed is a carefully balanced and completely independent system of examinations including comprehensive goal examinations as the end with the various stages of development toward this goal measured and described as accurately as possible. With these two aspects of examinations in mind I see a reconciliation between the points of view of the College Entrance Examination Board and the Educational Records Bureau.[8]

Brigham's reservations about the testing movement in general and the activities and opinions of Learned and Wood in particular were not shared by others who were influential in guiding the Board's affairs. In 1936 George W. Mullins, a professor of mathematics at Barnard and a longtime director of readings for the College Board, succeeded Fiske with the title of executive secretary. He and Stalnaker, who had joined the Board's staff as a consultant examiner to explore with the examining committees methods of increasing the reliability of examinations, were more favorably disposed than Brigham was toward Learned and Wood's work.

Keenly interested at the time in the Board's use of standardized tests of aptitude and achievement was a most commanding figure, President James B. Conant of Harvard; sharing his interest were several members of his staff, including the chairman of the admissions committee, Richard M. Gummere, and a young assistant dean whose name was Henry Chauncey.

Of particular interest to Conant was the possibility of using tests to measure the aptitude for college work of scholarship applicants earlier in the year so that they could be offered admission before they made plans to go elsewhere. The week in June during which the SAT was administered along with the written examinations was considered much too late. Representatives of Harvard, Yale, and Princeton therefore made arrangements with Board officials for a special April administration of the SAT in 1937. Arrangements were also made for Achievement Tests to be offered the afternoon of the same day in a number of subjects, including social studies, modern foreign languages, biology, chemistry, and physics. These tests were provided by Wood through an agreement with the Cooperative Test Service.

More than two thousand candidates took the tests the first time they were offered; each candidate took the SAT and as many as three of the new Achievement Tests. Both the April date and the tests themselves attracted the attention of additional colleges, some of which expressed interest in using the tests for all applicants and not just for those who were applying for scholarships. The Board acted to make the tests available to all comers in 1939, and the number of candidates soon soared to over 10 thousand. Many colleges adopted the practice of requiring applicants to take the SAT and the Achievement Tests in April and the written examinations in June in subjects for which objective tests were not available, such as English, history, and Latin.

In the meantime discussions had been taking place among Mullins, Learned, Wood, and Gummere about the possibility of merging the testing activities of the College Board with those of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and the American Council on Education. Learned had recently undertaken to establish the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) program under the auspices of the Carnegie Foundation but was concerned about its future funding, and Wood was hard put to make the Cooperative Test Service self-supporting. A merger appeared to offer the promise of more efficient testing arrangements, more productive research, and more financial security for each of the separate testing activities.[9]

When Gummere told Conant about the idea in 1936, Conant agreed to do what he could to build support for it. An opportunity presented itself when Wood asked him to speak the following year at a meeting of the Educational Records Bureau. Toward the end of his address Conant commented on certain advantages he foresaw in "combining in one organization a number of our present testing and examining agencies." He spoke of the considerable amount of research that was needed to break down what he called "composite academic ability" and "to develop predictive tests for all sorts of vocations and avocations." He mentioned the need to assure "the independent functioning of certain of the present boards" and cited in particular the College Board:

> The continued existence of the College Entrance Examination Board would be essential. Many colleges, including Harvard, need these examinations and I understand many schools agree as to their value. From my point of view

> such examinations are particularly necessary for the boy of somewhat less than the highest rating of "composite academic ability," for with such students this lack along academic lines must be offset by thorough training and careful education in suitable pre-college subjects.[10]

Conant concluded by saying there was a need for "varieties of tests and examinations in school, between school and college, and in college" and that this required "a more intimate association of all those interested in this subject so that we might coordinate the activities, exchange ideas and direct a common program of research and study."

Expecting his well-intentioned plug to be particularly pleasing to psychologists actively engaged in testing, Conant was surprised to discover that Brigham was fiercely opposed to the idea. In an article published in *School and Society* a few months after Conant's address, Brigham warned that "the present testing movement carries the germs of its own destruction." In unusually harsh terms he once again attacked "testers," again referring, it was generally assumed, to Learned and Wood. He charged them with being more concerned with promoting the use of tests than with improving them, with lacking adequate backgrounds for work in education – "if that is broadly conceived as involving the transmission of man's cultural heritage" – and with creating a gulf between teaching and testing:

> The apparent conflict arose from the fact that testers having chosen their own weapons and set up their own target then told educators that this was the right one to shoot at. The effort of test builders to work with curriculum makers has usually resulted in mutual advantages. The curriculum builders have been forced to locate their targets on the ground – not in the stratosphere – and testers have been forced to aim in the general direction of the target.[11]

Brigham later apologized for what he called his "extraordinary ugly and ill-mannered" behavior, attributing it to very ill health at the time. His article, however, was effective in scotching for the time being any plans for merging the Board's testing operations with those of Learned and Wood.

Dominating the national attention in the next few years were the Battle of Britain and premonitions that it was only a matter of time before the United States would become involved in the war. The College Board was uniquely prepared to play a role once this country was engaged. The resources acquired and the experience gained in developing and administering objective tests of aptitude and achievement were readily adaptable to wartime needs. The War Department, eager to be ready with plans for the classification of commissioned and enlisted personnel in the event of a necessary large-scale mobilization, appointed Brigham early on to serve as an expert consultant, and he gave his all to this assignment before his untimely death in 1943. Stalnaker was also called on for wartime service to the government in a number of important ways.

The war's effect on the Board's program of entrance examinations was dramatic and surgical. On Pearl Harbor Day, 7 December 1941, representatives of Harvard, Yale, and Princeton were holding one of their periodic meetings, this time in Princeton, to discuss College Board matters. Gummere was present from Harvard; Edward S. Noyes was there from Yale; and Radcliffe Heermance, in whose office and den the meeting took place, was present as both Princeton's representative and host of the occasion. Also on hand was Mullins, the Board's executive secretary. Heermance received word of the bombing shortly after lunch. He informed the others, and before the afternoon was over, the College Board was readied to make a fundamental change in its program.

At all three institutions it was already understood that in the event the United States entered the war, they would change their instructional programs so that students could begin to take courses early in the summer rather than in the fall. The examinations scheduled for June 1942 would come too late for admissions purposes. The representatives at the meeting therefore agreed, after consultations with the presidents of the three institutions and with the Board's chairman, Marion E. Park, president of Bryn Mawr, to recommend to the Executive Committee that preparations be made for a major administration of the SAT and the Achievement Tests in April and for an administration in June limited to these same tests. There seemed little point in offering any written examinations in June because of the time it would take to grade them and the few candidates who were likely to take them.

The Executive Committee concurred, and the die was cast. The outbreak of war had wrenched the Board away from a pattern of written examinations based on definitions of requirements – a pattern that had endured for more than 40 years. It was a pattern that Brigham had defended because it helped to provide a "framework" for the secondary school curriculum, and that Learned and Wood had attacked because it set arbitrary standards that were not appropriate or fair for many students and in any case not the business of a testing program. To those whose sentiments were akin to Brigham's, the wrenching was painful – it meant the loss of valued features of the Board's work that involved teaching and teachers. To those, on the other hand, whose attention was centered on the power of tests to measure, predict, and guide the educational progress of individual students, the wrenching provided a sense of relief. Unencumbered by examinations that were considered seriously flawed as measuring devices and inappropriately saddled with educational purposes, the Board in their view was free to pursue its proper destiny.

Fuess reports that it was clear to those closest to the workings of the Board that the onset of the war only hastened a break with the past that was bound to occur at some point.[12] While colleges in increasing numbers and to an increasing degree were making use of the SAT and the Achievement Tests, their interest in requiring applicants to take the older examinations was waning. The newer tests not only provided colleges with more accurate and useful information about student capabilities than that provided by the written examinations; they were less offensive to the school officials and teachers whose objectives and standards did not correspond to those embodied in the Board's definitions and examinations.

The Eight-Year Study, so called because it went on from 1933 to 1941, was initiated by the Progressive Education Association and funded by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching to demonstrate that schools freed from the constraints of college entrance requirements could prepare students as well for college work as could schools that set their sights on meeting such requirements. Colleges participating in the study agreed to waive their entrance requirements, including College Board examinations, for applicants from the participating schools.[13]

To what extent the study made its case that college entrance requirements were unnecessary and possibly harmful is difficult to assess – the question involves a tangle of value judgments as well as cause-and-effect considerations – but the study was widely viewed as making such a case. Many educators were convinced that it was wrong for colleges to determine what schools should teach, whether acting individually or through the medium of the College Board.

Aware of the hostility toward the Board's older program of examinations within a large segment of the secondary school community, the Board's leaders were also aware that many headmasters, principals, and teachers, as well as many college presidents and professors, continued to value the program highly because of its educational purposes and because of its emphasis on writing and other free responses to questions. As a concession to these educators, arrangements were made for the examination papers in English and American history, which had already been prepared for use in the June 1942 administration, to be sent to any secondary school willing to administer and grade them, with the understanding that they would serve as terminal school examinations and not as college entrance examinations.

More than 200 schools from all parts of the country subscribed to the plan; about 10,000 examinations in English and roughly 6,500 examinations in American history were distributed. As Fuess commented, "Not even the *obiter dicta* of professional researchers could suppress the widespread conviction that the writing of an essay offered valuable evidence as to a pupil's ability to use and understand his own language."[14] In 1943, bowing to pressures that continued to be exerted, the Board added a one-hour essay examination in English composition to the group of Achievement Tests. It also added a comprehensive examination in mathematics in response to requests from engineering schools. Both examinations required readers, 40 for the English Composition Test and three for the Comprehensive Mathematics Test. According to Fuess, "It was in striking contrast with the old days when an army of Readers invaded Morningside Heights each June, looking forward with anticipation to a reunion with old friends."[15]

Those who valued the Board's older program wondered, quite naturally, if the June examinations would be restored after the war. Fuess reports, however, that the Board's "inner circle" was quite sure the old days were over for good. Mullins included these words in the Board's *Annual Report* for 1942: "The passing of the June essay-type examination after continuous use for forty-one years marks the end of an era so far as the history of the Board is concerned."[16]

The history of the Board during the war years actually had less to do with college admissions and with education in general than it did with the selection and training of men and women for various kinds of wartime service. The Board, with Stalnaker playing a leading role, assisted in the design of, and assumed responsibility for developing and administering, both the Army-Navy Qualifying Tests and the tests that were used as part of the Navy V-12 program. For the navy alone the Board eventually produced, printed, or reprinted 133 different tests. It also became involved in the construction of tests for the Department of State, the Coast Guard Academy, and other government bodies. In addition it undertook some testing activities, during or shortly after the war, that according to Fuess lay "on the fringe of the central purpose for which it was founded."[17] These included an aptitude test for veterans seeking admission to college and tests for students applying for Westinghouse and Pepsi-Cola scholarships.

It is confusing to speak of "the Board's" doing any of these things, because the projects were actually carried out by an ever-increasing number of professional psychologists and test technicians based in Princeton whose activities and feats were baffling to most members of the Executive Committee and to many representatives of member colleges. The Princeton office of the Board was clearly where the action was. "There was, indeed, some danger," Fuess commented, "that the tail would wag the dog." He sensed a certain "unconscious naïveté" in a comment in the Board's 1947 *Annual Report:* "'The Board continues to maintain its New York office as a center for Board and committee meetings. Much of the editorial work on various publications is done here, and the office itself serves as a source of information about Board activities.'"[18]

With standardized tests proving so obviously successful in making a contribution to the war effort, and bringing both increased prominence to the Board and substantial increases in its income, there was probably a tendency among those directly involved with the tests to place greater emphasis on the importance of their measurement function and at the same time to magnify the flawed nature of essay examinations as measuring devices. As early as 1943 Stalnaker was ready to indict essay examinations in unusually strong terms:

> The type of test so highly valued by teachers of English, which requires the candidate to write a theme or essay, is not a worth-while testing device. Whether or not the writing of essays as a means of teaching writing deserves the place it has in the secondary school curriculum may be equally questioned. Eventually, it is hoped, sufficient evidence may be accumulated to outlaw forever the "write-a-theme-on" type of examination.[19]

In 1945 Stalnaker resigned from the Board to become a professor of psychology and the dean of students at Stanford University. Chauncey, who had served under Stalnaker as associate director of the Army-Navy Qualifying Tests while on leave from Harvard, was appointed to succeed him. A year later Mullins resigned his post as the Board's executive secretary, exhausted by efforts to perform in this capacity while continuing to teach at Barnard. Urged by members of the Executive Committee to stay on as the committee's chairman, he agreed to do so. In 1946 it became Chauncey's turn to assume the responsibilities of chief executive officer of the Board, first as acting executive secretary and subsequently in the new title of director. For help in administering the Board's affairs he arranged for the appointment of

Richard H. Sullivan as assistant director and William W. Turnbull as secretary. Harold O. Gulliksen, a former member of the psychology department at the University of Chicago, who had served with distinction since 1945 as the Board's research secretary, rounded out the roster of full-time appointed officers.

Serving as chairman of the Board at this time was Edward S. Noyes, a Yale English professor and admissions officer who for many years had served as a College Board reader and chief reader. It fell to him to preside over the Board during a period when it faced and settled the most momentous question in its long lifetime – whether or not to join in a revived scheme to merge the testing and research activities of the Board with those of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and the American Council on Education. While such a scheme had been considered desirable and viable by a few enthusiasts before the war, Brigham's article and the war itself had in effect tabled it. When the war was over, however, it once more became a live issue.

Initiative again lay with the Carnegie Foundation and, in particular, with its staff member Learned. Late in 1945 he had brought up the subject with both Mullins and Chauncey. Learned said he was retiring soon and as a consequence both the foundation and the Carnegie Corporation of New York were seeking some way to turn over the Graduate Record Examination and the Pre-Engineering Test, which he had developed, to another organization. There followed a luncheon meeting of Chauncey and Mullins with President Devereux Josephs of the Carnegie Corporation of New York; Charles Dollard, a staff member of the corporation; and Learned. Josephs expressed interest in seeing established a large, nationally recognized testing agency. He believed this could be accomplished by asking the College Board to assume responsibility for the Graduate Record Examination and the Pre-Engineering Test. It was agreed that Dollard would visit Princeton to explore the possibilities with Chauncey. Josephs suggested that Chauncey would make an excellent director of the enlarged organization. Following such a visit and a meeting of Chauncey with Conant in Cambridge, the president of the Carnegie Foundation, Oliver C. Carmichael, invited Conant to chair a special committee on testing, whose members included several university presidents, a graduate school dean, and a state commissioner of education.

According to Conant the Carnegie Committee on Testing "carried out the task which Josephs wished us to perform."[20] It recommended that there be created a new organization called the Cooperative Educational Testing Commission. Its report, which was actually titled the "Preliminary Report of the Committee on Testing," provided a broad-brush description of the commission's purpose and nature and its connections with the organizations whose testing activities it was designed to assimilate. The report emphasized the importance of integrating the testing activities of the College Board and the other organizations so that overlapping and competition could be avoided and more attention given to, and more funds made available for, advancing the science of educational measurement. One specific recommendation was that the new organization should be under the wing of the American Council on Education.

The committee made it a point to meet with representatives of each concerned organization and met last with a small group from the College Board that included Noyes, Katharine E. McBride (who succeeded Marion E. Park as president of Bryn Mawr in 1942), Mullins, and Chauncey. The group suggested that it would be wise for the full Board to have an opportunity to discuss the committee's findings directly with committee members. Arrangements were made for the Annual Meeting of the Board in October 1946 to serve as such an occasion. Present as representatives of the committee in addition to President Conant were President Edmund E. Day of Cornell and President Henry M. Wriston of Brown.

In his opening remarks Conant said that the committee had been appointed by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching to make recommendations intended to "further the general testing progam in the United States." He reported that all members of the committee were firm believers in "the importance of a testing program" and in "its significance for the future of American education." Aware that the proposed subordination of the new body to the American Council on Education had aroused concerns, he explained his reasons for favoring a situation in which institutions using tests would participate in one national body rather than in two separate associations. Aside from the competition he believed might build up between the council and the College Board if both organizations continued to function independently, he said he was concerned about the confusion it seemed to cause government and foundation officials when they perceived that two different associations involved in testing claimed they represented the interests of colleges.[21]

Conant then added a thought that had occurred to him after the report was written. While the report had recommended that provision be made in the new organization's charter for certain functions of the present agencies to continue, for "each one to do the things that it was originally set up to do," it had not been specific. It seemed to him, he said, that it might be useful to add the statement that "such colleges and schools that wish to continue groups should do so as consumer organizations," so as "to be in touch with that branch of the total cooperative testing commission" that was of particular concern to them.[22]

Asked if he wished to add to what Conant had said, Wriston said he thought two points needed emphasis: one was the importance of developing a research capability, and the second, picking up on Conant's final remark, was the importance of ensuring that each agency would continue to perform functions "quite apart from that work of research and development." He also said he did not regard what was proposed as a "merger" and that "it would be to the best interest of American education for these agencies not to go out of business."[23]

In the discussion that followed, attention focused on three points. One was the prospect of the new organization's being linked in some subordinate way to the American Council on Education; several of those who spoke had reservations about this. The second was the place of secondary schools in the new organization. The third was the College Board's future status, an apparent source of concern to many in the audience. Dean C. Mildred Thompson of Vassar voiced her concerns as follows, as recorded by the stenotypist in the transcript of the proceedings of the October 1946 Annual Meeting of the Board:

> I think in connection with the last point that Mr. Conant made, in which a group like this is referred to as a consumer's group—I am thinking particularly of us on the side of production, because we do perhaps think of ourselves as producing something and not just consumers of tests. I think there is a great deal in this program that is looking upon a testing function outside, and there is room for research that we haven't tested, but I am also thinking of the College Board because I have seen it operate for years, and to me one of its very great services is being the place where school and college meet and where we have been able to develop our own goals for education at this stage of school and college. It has been extremely helpful as I have seen it. I have wondered whether or not the College Board was departing from that and interesting itself primarily in testing. A great loss would come in education, I think, if we forgot that function.[24]

McBride eventually moved that the chairman appoint a committee of not more than five members "to consider the place of the College Board in the field of testing, with special reference to the report of the Carnegie Committee," and to report its recommendations to the Executive Committee.[25]

Such a committee was appointed. Chaired by McBride, it consisted of two additional college presidents, two heads of schools – one private and one public – and Mullins and Noyes, who served ex officio. By February 1947 the Board was ready to accept a modified arrangement, which ruled out subordinating the new agency to the American Council on Education as Conant had proposed. This did not please George F. Zook, president of the council, and further negotiations took place, culminating in an agreement satisfactory to all parties, which the Board adopted at its fall meeting.

The agreement provided for the creation of Educational Testing Service (ETS), a nonprofit corporation to be administered by a board of trustees, members of which were to be named by the College Board, the Carnegie Foundation, and the American Council on Education. The College Board agreed to contribute all its assets in excess of $300,000 – roughly a quarter million dollars in securities alone – and to sign over to ETS all testing contracts that did not pertain to its programs of admissions tests. The Carnegie Foundation and the American Council on Education also turned over various testing programs, Carnegie agreeing in addition to contribute $750,000 in cash and securities and the council giving all its assets in connection with its testing activities in excess of $185,000.[26]

On 19 December 1947 the Regents of the State of New York granted a charter to ETS, and the next day the new ETS Board of Trustees met for the first time. Initially the trustees were Raymond Allen, president of the University of Washington; Joseph W. Barker, president of the Research Corporation of New York City; Oliver C. Carmichael, president of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching; James B. Conant, president of Harvard University; James W. Fulbright, senator from Arkansas; Harold Hunt, superintendent of the Chicago Public Schools; Katharine E. McBride, president of Bryn Mawr College; Thomas R. McConnell, dean of the University of Minnesota; Lester E. Nelson, principal of Scarsdale High School, New York; Edward S. Noyes, chairman of the College Entrance Examination Board; Frank T. Spaulding, commissioner of New York City; and George F. Zook, president of the American Council on Education.

At that meeting on 20 December 1947 Conant was elected chairman of the ETS Board of Trustees, Barker was elected chairman of the ETS Executive Committee, and Chauncey (then director of the College Board) was appointed ETS president. Other officers of the College Board, including Harold O. Gulliksen, Richard H. Sullivan, and William W. Turnbull, also assumed posts as ETS officers; staff members of the Board in its Princeton office kept on doing what they were accustomed to do but as members now of the ETS staff.

Throughout the transition period, Noyes remained as chairman of the College Board and Mullins as chairman of the Executive Committee. An interim committee was also established to carry on the routine administration of the Board, comprising Frank H. Bowles, director of admissions at Columbia, Dorothy B. Osborne, headmistress of the Spence School, New York City, and Samuel T. Arnold, dean of Brown University.[27]

The ETS trustees announced their firm commitment "to interfere in no way with the non-testing activities of the organizations" that had brought ETS into being.[28] On the face of it there did not appear to be very much left for them not to interfere with as far as the College Board was concerned. The Board retained the right to prescribe the tests ETS would administer, to appoint examining committees for the Achievement Tests, and to set test dates and fees. It also retained its structure as a membership association. Beyond that, what the Board would do in the circumstances and what would become of it were a bit hazy.

Part 2.

The Modern College Board 1948–1980

5. A Tide Taken at the Flood: Evolution of the Modern College Board

Educational Testing Service (ETS) became fully operational on 1 January 1948. In contributing to its creation, the College Board created for itself what amounted to an identity crisis. While the other two founding organizations – the American Council on Education and the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching – transferred in the transaction testing activities that were essentially appendages, the Board turned over more than half its tangible and financial assets, lost the full-time services of its key appointed officers, and delegated to ETS developmental and administrative functions in connection with the Admissions Testing Program (ATP), which it had managed on its own for almost half a century.

What the Board gave up in what was commonly referred to as the merger stood out clearly; what it gained was not so obvious. The future status of the Board was a matter of considerable conjecture. While the Board's Executive Committee debated what course to take, Henry Chauncey, Richard Sullivan, and William Turnbull retained their posts as Board officers on an unpaid basis. The assumption of some was that an office within ETS would be established that would carry on the administration of the Board's associational affairs, including committee appointments and meeting arrangements. The Executive Committee envisioned a more independent status for the Board, however, and decided to search for a new chief officer who could be relied on to take firm hold of the wheel and steer the association into new waters of service. In April, Chauncey, Sullivan, and Turnbull submitted their resignations as Board officials; after an interim period of management by a small committee, the Executive Committee announced – in the summer of 1948 – that Frank H. Bowles had agreed to serve as the Board's director.

A graduate of Columbia College, Bowles had served since 1934 as director of admissions for Columbia University. He had a long record of influential service to the College Board, chairing or serving on various important committees. He had also actively participated in other educational associations, including the Middle States Association and the American Association of Universities. Born in Taiwan, the son of a missionary, he was a serious, reflective, and somewhat private man with a rugged, reassuring bearing. He had earned the respect and the affection of the college and secondary school officials who regularly attended meetings of the Board, and within the Board's inner policy-making circle he was admired for his broad vision and his leadership ability.

As a leader of the College Board during what he looked back on as its period of "refounding," Bowles shared with the Board's original founder, Nicholas Murray Butler, years of association with, and an enduring devotion to, Columbia. The gap between the two men was wide, however, in their stature as educators and in the breadth of their experience both at Columbia and in the nation. Each was a man for a particular season in the College Board's history. Participating with Butler in creating and guiding the Board through its formative years were the presidents of leading universities, and serving as examiners for the Board's examinations were many of the nation's leading scholars. To all of them the significance of the Board lay as much in the power of its examinations program to set curriculum standards as in its usefulness for admissions.

In contrast, by the time Bowles assumed command, most of the representatives of member institutions were admissions officers who believed, as he did, that the Board's primary function was to conduct a program of examinations that served their professional interests. "The Board," Bowles declared, "having moved sharply and definitely away from its original function as a standardizing agency, is now primarily a service agency which no longer establishes standards except those governing the quality control of its own operations."[1] Bowles stated that the position of the Board regarding its tests was one of "maximum subject-matter coverage for minimum interference with curriculums," noting that this represented "complete abandonment of the practice of defining requirements in each subject as a frame of reference for both teacher and examiner."[2]

In thus divorcing the Board from its role as a curriculum standard setter, Bowles was maintaining the position set forth by Chauncey during his tenure as the Board's director. In a speech in 1947, Chauncey declared that the Board was guided by "the star of freedom," and one of the freedoms he identified was "freedom of curriculum and teaching methods in the schools."[3] Turnbull, the Board's former secretary, was more explicit. He wrote in an article that "the Board has deliberately abandoned its role as an arbiter of what should be taught, in favor of a new and more difficult role as impartial assessor of abilities and broad accomplishment."[4]

Bowles invited William C. Fels, a young colleague in Columbia's office of development, to join him in setting a new course for the Board. Fels's background included teaching English, studying law, and serving at Columbia as a counselor of veterans. Tall and lean, with features that hinted of Lincoln, Fels had an inquisitive, independent, and inventive mind and a zest for plunging into new ventures. The two men – Bowles more the cautious thinker and Fels more the daring doer – made a harmonious and resourceful team.

As they considered activities the Board might undertake in league with, but independent of, ETS, Bowles and Fels were fortunate to have little else of consequence to distract them. The contractual arrangement with ETS freed them from day-to-day responsibilities for the Admissions Testing Program. Registrations for the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) and the Achievement Tests were happily on an upswing, ensuring a comfortable level of income, and the Board's membership was in a quiescent state following the birth of ETS. Institutions in increasing numbers were seeking to join the Board; while this demanded a certain amount of attention, it was another reassuring indication that the organization was fundamentally healthy.

Whatever futures they envisaged for the Board, it is doubtful that Bowles and Fels saw with any clarity the extraordinary growth that lay ahead in the size and scope of the Board's activities. The Board was to be borne along on a tide of change and expansion in American higher education that caught even the most wild-eyed forecasters by surprise. While the tide was a long time building, its origins generations back in the nation's history, it was World War II that gave it its remarkable momentum.

World War II was a "good war" in the minds of most Americans, and one expression of the nation's gratitude to the young men and women who served in it was the GI Bill. Among the benefits it provided were funds to pay for a college education. It was assumed by those who wrote and supported the legislation that only a small percentage of veterans would take advantage of this educational opportunity. A college degree was generally thought to be beyond the ambitions and capabilities of most young Americans. In the fall of 1946, however, more than a million veterans enrolled in colleges and universities throughout the country. In one year the number of college students doubled, shattering prevailing stereotypes of colleges as sheltered reservations for dependent adolescents. Institutional facilities were severely strained, including those concerned with the admission of students.

How to cope with the invasion of veterans was not the only concern. The war had brought the United States to a position of preeminent power in the world; if the nation's industrial and economic strength was to remain at peak levels, it was essential for the colleges and universities to pour out a steady stream of scientists, engineers, and other highly trained specialists. Was the educational system up to such a demand? It appeared to many that it was not. Their worries increased when suspicions arose that Russia was in the process of creating behind the Iron Curtain an awesome arsenal that included atomic weapons.

Questions asked about the nation's schools and colleges covered wide ground. Had schools, as Arthur E. Bestor claimed, become educational wastelands?[5] Why were so many of the most talented high school graduates not going to college? Was inadequate college guidance the major problem or was it lack of money? And why did so many students who did enter college complain that their courses went over material already covered in high school and were poorly taught? Were college professors so preoccupied with their careers as scholars and researchers that they lacked commitment to – and possibly competence for – teaching undergraduates?

Questions were raised not only about the quality of education being offered but about the equality of opportunities for education. The participation in the war of many young black Americans made racial injustice stand out with special poignancy. In *An American Dilemma* Gunnar Myrdal pricked the nation's conscience with his exposition of the gap between its ideals and its practices.[6] Advocates of equal civil rights increasingly brought legal skills and the law itself into play to undo racial discrimination. In the first appearance of any American president at a meeting of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Harry Truman declared that "every citizen has the right to a decent home, to education, to adequate medical care, to a worthwhile job, to an equal share in the making of decisions through the ballot, to a fair trial in a fair court. And when I say the right of all Americans I mean all Americans."[7]

In 1946 Truman appointed his Commission on Higher Education for American Democracy. By the time the commission completed its work in 1948, it had set before the nation an ambitious and far-ranging blueprint for higher education. Called for were a vast expansion of state-supported institutions, two-year as well as four-year; federal scholarships for the most able, based on financial need; and the repeal of segregation legislation.

What the commission proposed was realized to a remarkable extent. Enrollments in institutions of higher education ballooned from 2.6 million in 1949–50 to 3.2 million in 1959–60 and to more than 7 million in 1969–70.[8] Community colleges sprang up in profusion. State funding for higher education increased dramatically, with federal funding eventually becoming available as well. Need gradually became accepted as the appropriate basis on which to make financial aid awards. In 1954 the Supreme Court acted to make segregation legally as well as morally indefensible by declaring the "separate but equal" doctrine to be invalid.

It was in the midst of this churning of events that Bowles and Fels played out their roles as pioneers for the modern College Board, with the rapidly expanding resources of ETS conveniently at hand. Their first undertaking in 1948 was to visit as many colleges and schools as they could to see if there were special needs the Board might usefully address. At a number of colleges Bowles talked with inexperienced admissions officers who were not sure how they should be going about the business of deciding whom to admit and whom to reject, including what use they should make of the College Board test scores. At the secondary schools Fels visited he met guidance counselors who were confronted by increasing numbers of college-bound students but who had only a limited store of knowledge about colleges to draw on in advising them.

Convinced that there was a need in the field for information and instruction of various kinds, a need that could only partially be met through personal contacts and regional or annual meetings of the Board, Bowles and Fels turned their attention to publication possibilities. Fels undertook to revise extensively an already existing quarterly publication, the *College Board Review*, designed to serve as a channel of communication with representatives of member institutions. Focused at first on the Admissions Testing Program and on associational activities of the Board, the *Review* gradually expanded its coverage and its readership by including articles of more general educational interest.

Fels then threw himself into the task of transforming another existing publication, which listed the admissions schedules of member colleges, into a much more useful publication for applicants and guidance counselors. Disturbed as well as amused by the idyllic, monotonous self-portraits colleges painted in their catalogs, he prevailed on two admissions officers he admired – Mary E. Chase of Wellesley and Eugene S. Wilson of Amherst – to draft concise, factual descriptions of their institutions. With these as a starting point, Fels developed a format for entries in what was named *The College Handbook,* and the *Handbook* soon established itself as a valued, widely used resource. Confined for a number of years to colleges that were members of the College Board, it served as a special inducement for other colleges to join the Board.

Another notable publication during this period was *College Board Scores.* The author was Henry S. Dyer, who joined the College Board staff in 1952 after serving in the testing office at Harvard and later went on to become an ETS vice president. It was his intention to make the statistical concepts involved in interpreting and using the SAT and the Achievement Tests as intelligible and interesting as possible to admissions and guidance personnel, many of whom were neither versed in such concepts nor particularly keen about them. It was generally agreed that his fresh, forthright exposition enabled a host of readers to use the Board's tests both more knowingly and more confidently.

More than publications were needed to solve some of the problems plaguing college admissions. Differences among colleges in admissions forms, procedures, and schedules complicated matters for counselors and for applicants who chose to apply to more than one college. A small group of highly selective private colleges in the Northeast, longtime members of the Board, became the targets of an unusually large number of such applicants. The strategy of applicants was to apply to most or all of the colleges in the group in the hope that at least one and maybe more would offer admission. The strategy was impaired, however, because the institutions set different deadlines for offers of admission to be accepted or forfeited. Applicants and school counselors complained bitterly, and college admissions officers sought assistance from the Board in establishing a uniform acceptance date. Working with them, Fels developed plans for the Board to play a coordinating role in setting, publicizing, and periodically reviewing what was named the Candidates Reply Date Agreement (CRDA).

Admission to college was meanwhile becoming a matter of intense interest not only to those directly involved as applicants, guidance counselors, or admissions officers but to educators and public officials whose perspective was national in scope. In 1950 the Commission on Financing Higher Education approached Bowles about the possibility of the College Board's undertaking a study of the total college-going population. Bowles responded by engaging Byron S. Hollinshead, president of Coe College, to conduct such a study while serving temporarily as a member of the Board staff. Two years later Hollinshead reported his findings in a book published by the Columbia University Press titled *Who Should Go to College in America.*[9] A major conclusion of the book was that many of the most academically able young people in the nation were not among those enrolled in college, while many of those who were enrolled had only modest academic qualifications. This raised broad policy questions that seemed to appeal to Bowles as questions for the College Board to address and for him to speak and write about in his role as the Board's leader.

In 1953 Bowles and Fels worked together to set in motion the first of a series of 10 annual colloquiums on college admissions. The purpose behind them was to build a stronger professional base for the practice and study of college admissions. Arrangements were made for the colloquiums to be held at Arden House, originally the home of Averell Harriman and now a conference center operated by Columbia University. Taking place immediately after meetings of the College Board in New York City, the colloquiums were attended by staff members of the Board and of ETS as well as by admissions officers of member institutions. Each colloquium addressed a particular area of interest. Focused at first on aspects of the work performed by admissions officers, colloquiums in later years dealt with such subjects as the identification and nurturing of talent, precollege guidance, the secondary school curriculum, and the relevance of the behavioral sciences to education. Papers presented by leading authorities in the areas being examined at any given colloquium were subsequently included in a special publication and thus made more widely available.

The colloquiums, the Hollinshead study, the Candidates Reply Date Agreement, and the Board's various publication ventures all helped to create an enlarged perception of the College Board as an organization concerned not only about its one program of admissions tests but about many aspects of college admissions, from broad as well as narrow perspectives. They also established the Board's chief officer as a recognized national educational leader. As the decade of the fifties approached the midpoint, Bowles could justifiably believe that both he and the Board were carrying out substantially larger missions than those generally ascribed to them at the time ETS was founded.

While the Board was thus perceived as having expanded significantly the scope of its mission and the range of its activities, certain fundamental conditions of its existence remained unchanged: the overwhelming majority of member college representatives continued to be admissions officers, and they continued to constitute the political heart of the Board. The Board and ETS continued to be bound together by cords of mutual dependence. And both ETS and the Board continued to look to the Admissions Testing Program as the source of their income and the means for them to grow. For the College Board the dependence on this one program was almost complete: it was from the use colleges made of the SAT and the Achievement Tests that the Board derived its viability as an association and its visibility as an educational entity.

Prospects for the future growth of the Board rested on the willingness of colleges that were not requiring the SAT or the Achievement Tests to institute such requirements; several circumstances conspired to bring more institutions into the fold, thereby boosting year by year the number of fee-paying candidates. From a marketplace point of view the Admissions Testing Program was a remarkable success. The basic condition for growth was set by increases in the total number of college applicants. Even before the so-called baby boom that followed the war had had time to affect the number of students of college-going age, simultaneous increases in the percentage of students who completed high school and the percentage of high school graduates who decided to seek a college education compounded to swell the ranks of applicants. As a consequence many colleges found themselves in the position of turning away almost as many applicants as they were able to admit, and sometimes even more.

Colleges that chose to use the Board tests as one basis for admissions decisions were influenced by a variety of circumstances. There was a strong emphasis at the time on high academic standards; some of the most prestigious institutions in the land were known to be users of the tests; membership in the College Board was perceived to be an asset; standardized tests were accepted as useful educational tools; and ETS was known to be a leader in the field of educational measurement. By no means the least important circumstance, however, was that the Admissions Testing Program had many features that made it unusually attractive to admissions officers.

Through use of the tests it was possible to compare applicants from different schools with different grading standards on at least one uniform as well as relevant basis. Colleges were able through validity studies to determine how much weight to assign to school grades and test scores in predicting the college performance of applicants. Test scores remained constant in meaning from administration to administration and from year to year. Tests were administered at convenient times and places for applicants. There was little bother and no cost to colleges in requiring applicants to take the tests. Test security was tight enough to minimize cheating as a confounding factor.

The implications of the program for admissions officers and the implications their use of the program had for the well-being both of the Board and of ETS were clear-cut. On the other hand, the program's implications for teachers at the secondary level and for others who were concerned about the curriculum were perceived differently in different quarters. Among the officers and staff members of the Board and ETS it had become a matter of conviction that the tests had one overriding function, which was to provide users with accurate and fair scores that served their purposes.

Partly as a corollary to this conviction and partly as a principle with its own ideological basis, it had also become a matter of conviction that the tests should measure what teachers taught but should not influence what or how they taught. A companion conviction also took hold that the tests, in fact, did not influence teachers to any appreciable extent. It was stoutly believed that the tests sampled the learning of students so broadly and thoroughly that neither they nor their teachers had any reason to be particularly concerned about them.

This perception of the tests, particularly the Achievement Tests, was not shared by all who took an interest in them. There were some who believed that the tests definitely affected the way teachers went about their teaching, and there were also some who believed that this was an appropriate function for them. Among these in 1950 were members of the Subcommittee on Achievement Tests of the Committee on Examinations. Chaired by Frank D. Ashburn, headmaster of the Brooks School, North Andover, Massachusetts, this group decided to undertake a survey of the opinions that educators held regarding the influence of the tests. Questionnaires were prepared that asked whether the tests were thought to affect teaching and, if so, what those effects were thought to be. Invited to participate in the survey were more than a thousand teachers and administrators in an approximate cross section of colleges and schools. From the responses the subcommittee formed the impression that overall there was "a strong opinion" that the Achievement Tests were influencing secondary school instruction. It appeared that the influence was more pronounced in independent schools than in public schools. There were many opinions about the precise nature of the influence.[10]

The study failed to shake the conviction of most members of the Committee on Examinations and of the Board and ETS officers that the tests neither should nor did affect the curriculum. Fels argued that while the results of the study did suggest an influence of the Achievement Tests on the curriculum, the influence exercised was "not necessarily bad."[11] There was no yielding on the claim that it was not the business of the Board to exert any such influence. When the subcommittee ventured to recommend in 1952 that the Board recognize and accept the influence of its tests on teaching as a major responsibility, the recommendation was tabled. Bowles and Fels had earlier recorded their belief that it was "not a presently defined function of the Board to set curricular patterns."[12]

In 1951 Bowles visited England to observe how the various examination boards there went about examining candidates for university entrance. He was understandably struck by the extraordinary differences in the way examinations were viewed and handled on the two sides of the Atlantic. English examining boards were continuing to function in much the way the original College Board had functioned. Examinations were of the essay type and were based on published descriptions of courses; teachers were relied on to read and grade answer papers. Bowles guessed that the reliability of the examinations "must be fantastically low." English examining boards simply did not accord reliability and other psychometric considerations the amount of attention the College Board and ETS devoted to them. The examinations were largely under the control of university faculty members, and to them the educational function of entrance examinations was at least as important as their ability to function as measuring devices. That the system appeared to work as far as the English were concerned Bowles attributed to the homogeneity of teachers at both secondary and university levels and to the relatively small percentage of students who went on to university.[13]

If it puzzled American psychologists that the reliability of measurement was not taken so seriously in England as it was in the United States, their own intense preoccupation with the matter was equally puzzling to English educators. Achieving maximum possible indices of test reliability in order to reduce measurement error was indeed a major objective of those at the Board and at ETS who were responsible for the tests. This was one of the reasons they favored the use of multiple-choice questions. The reliability of a test was directly related to the number of scorable items, and in one hour of testing it was possible to ask a large number of multiple-choice questions. Tests involving written answers were at a decided disadvantage in this regard because of the time required to write even a short paragraph, much less a full-blown essay. Such tests were further handicapped because readers were never able to agree completely with one another in their grading of answers.

To those who worked on the tests, as members of examining committees or as ETS test developers, multiple-choice tests were highly regarded not only because they produced high reliability coefficients but because they seemed to be capable of measuring most if not all important educational outcomes. It was mystifying to them that there were those who not only criticized objective tests on various rational grounds but were repelled by them, agreeing with W. H. Auden that

Thou shalt not answer questionnaires
Or quizzes upon World-Affairs,
  Nor with compliance
Take any test. Thou shalt not sit
With statisticians nor commit
  A social science.[14]

Despite the many critics of testing and the depth of their animosity, they were not able to muster enough strength to impede the growing use of the Board's Scholastic Aptitude Test and Achievement Tests. There was one issue, however, on which critics were able to rally considerable support, and that concerned the testing of writing ability. After 1943 the English Composition Test had consisted entirely of multiple-choice questions. Efforts to develop a test involving essays that achieved a satisfactory level of reliability had proved fruitless, and the types of multiple-choice questions that had been devised to measure writing ability indirectly were considered by those who wrote and used them to be quite satisfactory. No matter how strong a case ETS built for using multiple-choice questions to measure writing ability, however, there were many educators as well as members of the general public who remained highly skeptical. For some of them reliable measurement was neither the only nor the most important consideration. They worried about the effects on the teaching of writing of a test that did not require students to write anything. Among them were members of the Subcommittee on English Testing of the Committee on Examinations, and they proceeded to address the issue.

They concluded that there was an important "product of education"—in their view "the essence of education"—that was scarcely being measured at all. They described it as "the power to deal cogently and lucidly with ideas synthesized from reading and experience, both academic and practical." They recommended that the Board move to develop a new essay examination, three hours in length, with questions drawn from literature, science, and social studies and with grades based on separate ratings of factors such as organization, style, and content.[15]

Bowles agreed to pursue the idea of developing an examination along the lines proposed. He enlisted the services of Earle G. Eley, an examiner in English and humanities at the University of Chicago, and made arrangements for Eley to work on the project in cooperation with ETS staff members. The group of developers eventually created a two-hour examination that required students to write essays. Called the General Composition Test (GCT), it was introduced in May 1954 on an experimental basis as an option in the Admissions Testing Program. It lasted for three years, in each of which it was required or otherwise promoted by a small number of colleges and taken by a few thousand candidates, most of whom were juniors in independent schools. It was finally judged a failure on the basis of both disappointing statistics and limited use. Bowles claimed that "part of the difficulty was due to the implacable hostility toward the idea shown by the members of the staff of Educational Testing Service who had to administer it, part to the total lack of interest (with a half dozen exceptions) the colleges showed in the examinations."[16]

The demise of the General Composition Test did not settle once and for all either the issue of testing writing ability or the more general issue of the ability of multiple-choice tests to bear the total burden of educational measurement. The Board's testing of writing ability would surface repeatedly in years to come; in May 1956—ironically, the month in which the GCT was administered for the last time—examinations that included essays made their appearance in a new program the Board had agreed to take under its wing, the Advanced Placement (AP) Program.

How this came to be a College Board program is described in chapter 6. The basic idea behind the AP Program was to give students opportunities while in high school to take freshman-level college courses and to have their performance in such courses taken into account by the colleges they entered. Although it was centered on placement after admission rather than on admission, it was strikingly reminiscent of the Board's original entrance examination program: the AP Program encouraged schools to teach certain courses and offered teachers guidance in teaching those courses. It made use of examinations that included essays. It called on the services of college and school teachers to write course descriptions, compose examinations, read answer papers, and set grading standards.

If the Board's decision to assume responsibility for the Advanced Placement Program cast doubt on the validity of earlier assertions by Bowles that the Board had relinquished its role as a curriculum molder, such assertions became even more suspect when the Board undertook in 1955 to appoint the Commission on Mathematics, whose members were clearly bent on updating and reforming mathematics teaching in secondary schools. An account of this commission is in chapter 7.

The Advanced Placement Program and the Commission on Mathematics were not the only new activities undertaken by the Board in the middle fifties. The College Scholarship Service (CSS), providing a means for institutions to base their awards of financial aid on centrally determined estimates of need, became fully operational in 1955. In 1956 the Board assumed responsibility for the Scholarship Qualifying Test, forerunner to the Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT), following its development by ETS. Also in 1956 the Board joined with the New York City Board of Education and the National Scholarship Service and Fund for Negro Students in sponsoring the Demonstration Guidance Project at Junior High School 43, designed to enrich the educational experiences of black students. In the same year the first book not directly concerned with admissions was published by the Board. Titled *Encouraging Scientific Talent* and written by Charles C. Cole, Jr., a Columbia dean at the time and later president of Lafayette College, it reported on a study of the nation's potential supply of scientists. The National Science Foundation had requested the Board to undertake the study.

In sponsoring the Advanced Placement Program and the College Scholarship Service, both of which were ongoing, revenue-producing activities, the Board broke its mold as a one-program organization. In the process it outgrew its full name, the College Entrance Examination Board: its examinations were no longer concerned only with entrance to college, and its activities, conducted on a continuing basis, were no longer confined to examinations.

William Fels resigned as associate director of the Board in 1956, returning to Columbia to serve as associate provost. From there he went on to become the president of Bennington College until his life was cut short by cancer. In a warm tribute to him Bowles acknowledged his substantial contributions to the work of the Board, including its publications, the idea for the Candidates Reply Date Agreement, the organization of the College Scholarship Service, and his insistence that the Board adopt the Advanced Placement Program.[17]

Appointed to replace Fels as the Board's number two officer was Richard Pearson, who assumed the role of executive vice president in November 1956. Pearson, a Yale graduate who had studied English under Edward S. Noyes, had a long career behind him as an ETS administrator. His final years there were spent as director of programs conducted by ETS for the College Board, and he brought to his new position at the Board both an understanding of, and a respect for, the work ETS performed on the Board's behalf. At the same time he had a highly developed sense of the special position of the College Board in American education. One of his favorite adjectives for educators he admired was "broad-gauged," and it is a fitting description for Pearson, too. In 1963 he succeeded Bowles as the Board's president.

The Board was growing not only more diversified but also substantially larger. In 1957 Bowles reported that whereas college enrollments increased by roughly a third in the preceding 10 years – from two million to almost three million students – the number of students taking College Board tests increased almost fivefold, from 65,000 to 316,000. Accompanying this increase was a rise in the number of member institutions, from 79 to 150, and in the Board's income, from less than $100,000 to more than $3 million.[18]

Growth in the magnitude of the Board's total operation led increasingly to a sense that its organizational structure required revision. In 1957 the Board was granted a charter as an educational corporation by the Board of Regents of the State of New York. This change in the legal status of the Board served to clarify questions of liability and provided a more appropriate status for receiving grants and handling other financial matters. An elected Board of Trustees was established, replacing the Executive Committee as the primary governing body. The title of director was changed to that of president, and thus Bowles became the first chief officer to hold the title of Board president.

The process of incorporation provided a timely opportunity to review and revise the description of the Board's purposes as stated for some years without change in the Articles of Association. Three purposes were identified in that document: To conduct a program of tests; to maintain a continuing program of research to preserve the effectiveness of the tests; and to serve as a "medium" for the discussion of problems common to schools and colleges.[19]

In the charter that formed the basis for the Board's incorporation, its purposes were described more extensively. The "general objective" of the Board was stated as follows:

> To serve educational organizations in connection with the transition of students from secondary schools to colleges and other institutions of higher

> learning and in the coordination of secondary and higher educational activities relating to the identification and evaluation of student capacities, the admission of students, and their educational guidance.[20]

One sees here a recognition of the expansion of the Board's sphere of activity with respect to talent identification, guidance, and the coordination required to conduct the College Scholarship Service and the Advanced Placement Program.

Four specific purposes followed the statement of the general objective. The first three corresponded to the purposes identified in the Articles of Association. The fourth purpose, however, was strikingly new. It was "to further the development of representative opinion with respect to educational standards." There is little doubt that the major intention here was to recognize the existence of the Commission on Mathematics, which was getting up a full head of steam at the time the charter was drafted, and also the Advanced Placement Program.

Riding the crest of an extraordinary wave of change in American education, the College Board in the decade since the founding of ETS had expanded and had introduced new activities. It was also perceived by its leaders to be shouldering broader educational responsibilities, including those related to curriculum standards, which were reminiscent of responsibilities it had acknowledged and borne in earlier years.

The perception that the Board had a role to play in influencing the secondary school curriculum did not extend, however, to its major program of admissions tests. Here the mind-set persisted that it was not the proper business of the Scholastic Aptitude Test and the Achievement Tests to influence teaching practices and standards, and that what influence they had was of little consequence. It was difficult for those most concerned with the Board's welfare and most convinced about the merits of its tests to take seriously the charge by Jacques Barzun that "the use of these tests has a baleful influence on teachers and teaching,"[21] the barrage of criticisms levied against multiple-choice tests by Banesh Hoffmann,[22] or the comment by Arthur E. Bestor that "only a well-designed examination of the essay type comes close to requiring a student to function as an educated man must function in a real situation."[23]

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6. An Echo from the Past:

The Advanced Placement Program

In 1951, while the war in Korea was creating national headlines, there appeared in the news an item of special interest to educators. It concerned The Ford Foundation's creation of the Fund for the Advancement of Education, popularly referred to among educators as "the Fund." Such a broad mandate: "to advance and improve formal or institutional education in North America"; such a pair of reform-minded educators in charge: Clarence Faust of Stanford University and Alvin Eurich of the State University of New York; and such a lot of money: $70 million waiting to be spent before the Fund's termination in 1967.[1] Expectations that the Fund would stir things up and cause some changes were abundantly fulfilled. The College Board was one of several educational organizations that turned in new directions as the result of Fund-supported projects. The Advanced Placement Program, a program many teachers greeted with enthusiasm, was the direct outgrowth of projects initiated or financed by the Fund.

One of the Fund's first initiatives was to arrange with four universities – Chicago, Columbia, Wisconsin, and Yale – for the administration of what were called preinduction scholarships. The object was to give able male high school students an opportunity to enter college early – before their senior year – thereby ensuring two years of undergraduate education before the draft claimed them at age 18. The project soon lost this wartime connection, however, when a revision of draft regulations enabled draft-eligible students to complete their undergraduate programs. Women were declared eligible for the scholarships; eight additional colleges became participants; and the program became a full-blown experiment in early admission.

The consequences of the scholarships – for the 1,350 recipients and for the colleges they attended – were evaluated by researchers at Educational Testing Service. Their conclusions, reported in a 1957 publication titled *They Went to College Early*, were predominantly positive. The academic averages of students with scholarships exceeded those of a control group; their failure rate, although slightly higher than that of students in the control group, was lower than that of all their classmates. While they encountered more initial difficulties, these difficulties were neither serious nor lasting.[2]

Despite these encouraging results, early admission did not go on to become widely adopted, and support for the practice waned even among colleges participating in the scholarship program. The major roadblock was the intense opposition of school superintendents and principals; they did not favor losing the presence in their schools of their most outstanding students. Paul E. Elicker, executive secretary of the National Association of Secondary School Principals, went so far as to describe the announcement of the preinduction scholarships as "a bomb dropped on secondary education."[3]

The scholarship program, however, did stimulate interest in the underlying problem of moving academically talented students ahead with their education. While early admission to college provided one solution to the problem – possibly the only solution for students in schools that did not offer courses at college freshman level – there was another possibility for students whose schools did offer such instruction. Two projects supported by the Fund focused on placing students ahead in college, once they were admitted, if there was reason to believe they had already mastered the content of freshman courses.

One of these projects had its origins in faculty and alumni discussions of possible curriculum revisions at Phillips Academy in Andover, Massachusetts. Initiated by the headmaster, John M. Kemper, these discussions expanded to a full-scale consideration of the last two years at schools such as Andover and the first two years at colleges that many graduates attended. This four-year period was considered a potentially golden time for students to round out a substantial general education, but the indications were that it did not work out this way for many students whose education suffered from wasteful repetition of instruction in some subjects and a failure to continue work in other subjects.

Kemper received a grant from the Fund for the Advancement of Education in 1951 for a cooperative study to determine the best use of the four-year period. The study involved three private secondary schools – Andover, Exeter, and Lawrenceville – and three colleges – Harvard, Princeton, and Yale. Among the seniors who graduated from these colleges in 1951 were 344 alumni of the three schools. Their educational experiences became the focus of the study. Responsibility for planning and conducting the study was placed in the hands of a committee of six, each of whom was on the faculty of one of the participating schools or colleges. Under the chairmanship of Alan R. Blackmer, a teacher of English at Andover, the committee analyzed the secondary school and college courses taken by each student; they also queried the students by mail about their reactions to the education they had received. As the study progressed, the committee arranged for faculty members and administrators from the schools and colleges to meet periodically for discussions in depth of the results of the analyses and the issues they appeared to raise.

The committee's findings, reported in a 1952 book titled *General Education in School and College*, confirmed the suspected weaknesses in the four-year programs of many students, particularly those who were academically gifted and motivated.[4] The content of college courses in English, history, and science frequently duplicated material already covered in secondary school courses. Meanwhile, foundations established for learning foreign languages were often left to molder away.

One of the committee's major recommendations was that students with unusually strong preparation be given opportunities to enter college as sophomores rather than as freshmen. The rub was that fully satisfactory means were not available for determining how well students were prepared. Existing tests did not appear to be up to the task, and the committee believed that school grades were "often of dubious value to a college in view of the wide variation in standards." The committee concluded that what was needed was "a set of achievement examinations in the major subjects taught in school which would enable colleges supporting the examinations to give an entering student advanced placement." In an appendix to its report the committee included a proposal for an experiment in advanced placement – an experiment to be conducted "under the direction of the College Board." The author of the proposal was Henry Dyer of Harvard.

An experiment conducted along the lines of Dyer's proposal constituted the other Fund-supported project involving advanced college standing. The experiment was not conducted by the College Board, however. The prime mover was the president of Kenyon College, Gordon Keith Chalmers.[5] A former Rhodes Scholar and the author of an influential book, *The Republic and the Person: A Discussion of Necessities in American Education,* Chalmers did not share with the Andover project participants their enthusiasm for the concept of general education. Nevertheless, he was as enthusiastic as they were about the possibility of placing entering students in advanced courses if they had already mastered the content of freshman-level courses. His project was actually well along by the time the report of the three-school, three-college study was published in 1952.

Although Chalmers was interested in the idea of using examinations as a basis for making such placements, he believed the first requirement was to establish descriptions of freshman-level courses that faculty members would be willing to agree met their standards with respect to substance and rigor. If high schools were to teach courses based on such descriptions, and the examinations used for placing students ahead were also solidly based on the descriptions, he thought that colleges might then come around to accepting the idea that secondary schools were capable of teaching college-level courses. In other words, course descriptions and examinations based on the descriptions were both needed. Fifty years after Butler recognized the crucial role played by the definitions of subject matter in gaining acceptance for the College Board's original program of entrance examinations, Chalmers was apparently thinking along parallel lines.

Awarded a grant by the Fund for the Advancement of Education, Chalmers moved first to assemble a group of college presidents he thought would share his interest in the scheme. All but one of the 12 institutions represented were liberal arts colleges: Bowdoin, Brown, Carleton, Haverford, Kenyon, Middlebury, Oberlin, Swarthmore, Wabash, Wesleyan, and Williams; the exception was the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. All of them went along with the plan; they agreed to designate members of their faculties to participate in the development of course descriptions and examinations and to consider for advanced standing, when the time came, students entering as freshmen who had taken the courses described and had performed acceptably on the examinations.

Representatives of the 12 institutions formed the nucleus of a central steering committee for the project. This committee more than doubled when the heads of a number of secondary schools with strong academic programs accepted invitations to involve their schools in the study and to participate in planning its future directions. William H. Cornog, president of Central High School in Philadelphia, accepted appointment as the full-time project director on a leave-of-absence basis. The project was burdened with a long name: the School and College Study of Admission with Advanced Standing (SCSAAS).

The central steering committee selected 11 subjects for course descriptions: English composition, literature, physics, chemistry, biology, mathematics, Latin, French, German, Spanish, and history. Committees were appointed to write the descriptions; each committee consisted of seven faculty members, five from participating colleges and two from participating secondary schools. The various committees met during 1952 in Gambier, Ohio; in Cambridge, Massachusetts; and in Princeton, New Jersey. They did their best to come up with descriptions that would not only satisfy faculty members of the 12 institutions but serve as guides to the high school teachers who would be teaching the courses. Descriptions of all courses were completed, approved, and available for teachers to use by fall 1953.

For the project to succeed, it was now squarely up to the participating schools to demonstrate that they could teach the courses; 18 schools rose to the challenge. One was Newton High School in Newton, Massachusetts, and an article in the *College Board Review* by the superintendent and the principal later described the way this school went about introducing the courses. The account suggests the kinds of hurdles that all the schools had to surmount.[6]

The first necessity at Newton was to ensure that all interested parties were informed about the project and ready to support it. This included faculty members, parents, and members of the school committee (a body corresponding to the school board in other states). One difficulty was that there were some important questions to which no one had a sure answer in advance:

> Who are the ablest youth? Can we detect them? Will they respond? If grouped together, will they be typed as an elite—"the quiz kids"? Will they have to drop out of extracurricular activities? (What doth it profit a school if it gaineth a scholar and loseth its quarterback?) . . . Can a system of selection be protected from the over-ambitious parent? Or from the student of extreme aspiration and modest ability? . . . How much will it cost? Will it cost as much as the education of the mentally retarded, whose interests are protected by law?[7]

Despite uncertainties about such questions, the decision was made at Newton to go ahead with advanced standing courses; the courses selected were English composition, French, mathematics, biology, and physics. A special committee was formed to supervise the project in all its aspects; serving on it were the principal, the assistant principal, and the heads of all involved academic departments. Information about the project as it progressed was communicated on a regular basis to parents and others with particular concerns. Some parents wondered, for example, how much harder students had to work in the new courses. The answer given in a newsletter was: "Put it this way: they are having to work more in keeping with their capabilities. This is regarded as healthy for any child in any class at any time. More important is that they are tackling with zest concepts of a higher order of difficulty."[8]

While teachers at Newton and the other schools led their students through the new courses, the SCSAAS committees responsible for the course descriptions turned their attention to the development of examinations that would measure what the students had learned. Arrangements were made for Educational Testing Service to assist in developing the examinations and to handle their administration.

The only specification set in advance for the examinations was a three-hour length; committees otherwise had a free hand in designing them. The English and Latin committees decided to use essay questions exclusively; the French, German, and Spanish committees planned to rely mainly on essays but to use objective questions in the half-hour portions of the examinations designed to measure listening comprehension. The mathematics and science committees also opted for a mixture of essay and objective questions.

The history committee simply rebelled; it refused to develop any examination, arguing that colleges should be willing to trust secondary schools not only to teach competently but to assess soundly the proficiency of their students. It would be two years before examinations in American history and European history were introduced. One of the rebels was Charles R. Keller, a Williams College professor, who was not only to change his mind later about the need for examinations but to go on to become the first director of the Advanced Placement Program when it became a College Board program.

Late in the spring of 1954, 532 students in the 18 participating schools took a total of 929 examinations. Examinations taken by the largest numbers of students were in English, mathematics, and French. School and college teachers were enlisted to grade the written answers, assembling for this purpose at convenient locations. A 5-point scale was adopted, with 5 defined at the outset as "high honors" and 1 as "fail"; these definitions would subsequently be revised, and there would be no further identification of a grade as "failing." A chief reader, appointed for each examination, bore the responsibility of setting grading standards. The general impression was that the standards set for the various examinations were higher than those many college instructors used in grading their own students; this impression was bolstered by the results when arrangements were made for college students to take the examinations and their answers were included, without identification, among those of the school examinees.

The examination grades of students, along with copies of their written answers, were mailed to the institutions they entered. Students who entered the 12 participating colleges generally had a better chance of being considered for advanced standing than did those who attended other colleges. Since the 532 students fanned out to 94 institutions, many of them encountered faculty members and college officials to whom the idea of recognizing work done in high school was questionable and possibly unthinkable.

Enthusiasm remained high among those participating, however, and there were also converts. The number of schools offering advanced standing courses increased to 38 in 1954–55, and the number of students registering for the examinations almost doubled. The number of institutions that students enrolled in expanded from 94 to 134. The "experiment" was judged to be successful, but the problem the central committee now faced was how to keep it going on a self-sustaining basis while also giving it a chance to grow.

The committee, with the approval of the Fund for the Advancement of Education, decided to invite the College Board to assume responsibility for the program. At both ends of the invitation there were misgivings. Chalmers was not enthusiastic about transferring to the College Board a program whose popular name, the Kenyon Plan, was a tribute to his vision and initiative, and he perhaps shared the fears of some teachers that the College Board and ETS would somehow turn the program into one more objective testing enterprise.

On the other hand, Bowles was not sure that taking on the program was in the Board's interest. In a speech he made 2 December 1953 at a meeting of the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools, he offered his analysis of the obstacles that stood in the way of the project's achieving permanent status.[9] Recalling previous attempts to persuade colleges to grant credit on the basis of examinations, he noted that they had generally ended with abandonment. He reminded the audience that the old examinations of the College Board, based on published definitions of subject matter, had been "forced out of existence by secondary school protests." He observed further that the tradition of awarding credit or degrees on the basis of courses taken while in residence was not only strongly entrenched in the minds of faculty but firmly institutionalized – in legal definitions, in the standards of accrediting agencies, and in the admissions practices of graduate and professional schools.

In addition to these considerations, the financial uncertainties of sponsoring the new program apparently weighed heavily on Bowles's mind. It is possible, too, that he was reluctant to act against the wishes of Chalmers. His eventual decision to support the idea of the Board's taking on the program was due, he wrote later, to the persuasiveness of Fels.[10] A proposal that the Board accept the invitation extended by the SCSAAS committee to assume responsibility for the project was placed on the agenda of the Board's Annual Meeting in 1954. The votes cast were favorable. What had been the Kenyon Plan became the Advanced Placement Program of the College Board, later known as the AP Program, with the transformation taking effect during the 1955–56 academic year.

A grant by the Fund for the Advancement of Education to the College Board, completing the series of grants made to improve school-college articulation, helped to defray costs during the first year of Board sponsorship. The concerns of Bowles about financial feasibility, however, proved to be well founded. Despite the Fund's contribution the program ran up a thumping deficit in 1955–56. It would be many years before fees paid by candidates to take the examinations would cover expenses.

The worries of some educators that the Board would dilute, mechanize, or kill the spirit of the program proved to be less well founded. Conferences of school and college teachers were maintained, as were examinations that included free-response as well as multiple-choice questions. Bowles could hardly have found a director more imbued with the central values of the program and more determined to defend them than Keller, who was a crusader for all that the program could do for able high school students and their teachers.

In his first, fast-moving year of travel to dozens of schools, colleges, educational conferences, and committee meetings, Keller developed what he called an iceberg theory of the program.[11] Much more lay below the surface, he thought, than was immediately visible. The rub-off effect of Advanced Placement courses on morale and motivation throughout a school, he believed, was a significant aspect of the program. As one principal phrased it, "Benefits accrue not only to the students and teachers directly involved but to the whole student body and the entire staff."[12]

For teachers directly involved in teaching AP courses, the experience was often reported to be electrifying: "This is the kind of teaching you would not have to pay me to do." "For the first time in 25 years I have had a chance to learn and relearn the newer concepts in chemistry." "I take my life in my hands every time I go into that advanced class – it's the most exciting teaching I have ever done."[13]

The full consequences of the program for students were more elusive, since so much depended on what happened to them after they entered college. One early follow-up of AP students placed in sophomore courses revealed that almost all of them received grades of A or B and stood high in overall class rank by the end of their first year. Many students, even those with high grades on the examinations, were not placed ahead, however. While a few institutions such as Harvard, Michigan, and Yale moved rather quickly to award placement and credit for AP grades of 5, 4, and even 3, other institutions balked. In response to a questionnaire asking institutions what actions, if any, they had taken when approached by AP students, one institution commented that neither advanced placement nor credit was awarded "because the courses did not duplicate" their own courses. Another explained, "It is doubtful that anyone at the College is convinced that this is a step in the right direction; they would rather see stronger college prep courses for those that can take them rather than encroachment on college work by high schools."[14]

As a college professor himself, Keller was not surprised by this resistance to the program. He maintained a sense of proportion:

> College faculties are not easy to move, and there is no reason why they should be. In a recent letter about one of the summer conferences a friend wrote, "You should have seen some of the newcomers [to the program]. Inertia stood out all over them like warts on a toad." But by and large college teachers are men and women of good will, and given time, patience, and continuous endeavor, the Program may make even more rapid progress than is now hoped for.[15]

Progress during the program's first years was not rapid, but momentum did build, slowly and surely. The general climate was favorable. Public concern about the quality of education remained high; projects aimed at reforming secondary school instruction in various academic subject areas were in full swing; and Conant's recommendations for strengthening the total school curriculum were attracting a large, attentive audience. In a rare display of unanimity, Conant, Admiral Hyman Rickover, and the National Association of Secondary School Principals all publicly endorsed the AP Program.

In a burst of enthusiasm Paul Roundy, a member of the AP Mathematics Committee, exclaimed, "We have only our joys to celebrate."[16] That there was joy as well as toil in working on the program was evident at committee meetings, reading sessions, teacher conferences, and even at workaday sessions in the offices of the College Board and ETS. For many there was a sense of identification with, and commitment to, the program. As Jack Arbolino commented at one point, "They appropriated unto themselves a personal sense of responsibility for its welfare."

To advise the trustees and the officers of the Board on policy matters regarding the program, the Advanced Placement Committee was formed; Bayes Norton, a chemistry professor at Kenyon College, served as the first chairman. He was succeeded by Thomas Mendenhall, a professor of history at Yale and later president of Smith College. Keller, after directing the program for two years, was succeeded by David Dudley, an M.I.T. admissions officer. He, in turn, was followed after one year by Arbolino, associate dean of Columbia's School of General Studies, who was described by Bowles as "the first permanent director." Harlan P. Hanson replaced Arbolino in 1965 as director of the AP Program.

Growth of the program required advances on three fronts simultaneously. It was necessary to increase the number of schools offering at least one AP course and preferably several such courses, the number of students in these courses who chose to take AP Examinations, and the number of institutions that were willing to grant placement or credit on the basis of examination grades. Efforts on each front involved surmounting obstacles that could be overcome only by the personal commitment of a well-placed principal, teacher, school board member, college dean, or professor. The role of the program director and other staff members consisted mainly of being at the right place at the right time to offer explanations and encouragement and, more often than not, to connect someone new to the program with someone who knew the ropes.

The time and the place were not always auspicious. Meeting with faculty members of the University of Chicago in 1960, Arbolino realized too late that satisfaction with their own examinations apparently precluded any warmth toward the AP Program. When he returned to New York, he reported that he had been "politely eviscerated," and Bowles reminded him that "nobody hates a socialist so much as another socialist." At another, more successful meeting with the faculty and staff of a Catholic school, vibrations were perhaps too good: a Brother whispered to him as he left, "Don't let the Jesuits get their hands on the program or they'll swear they invented it."

If the threat of a takeover by the Jesuits was not cause for alarm, fears that the psychometricians would find a way of stripping the program of its emphasis on teaching and on essay examinations were fairly common. Teacher conferences continued to be supported, however, and essays became accepted as necessary if the examinations were to retain their credibility in the eyes of college faculty members. The Advanced Placement Committee did react with some concern when the Board's Aptitude Committee, composed of distinguished psychometric experts, offered to undertake a thorough study of the examinations as measuring devices. How to turn down the idea presented a problem of intercommittee diplomacy; Arbolino suggested to the Advanced Placement Committee that it consider, "We decline your offer because you are too busy."

The use of the questions involving essays or other kinds of free response not only ensured that teachers would continue to be engaged as readers but that the judgments of the chief readers would influence the setting of grading standards along with purely statistical considerations. The readings became a highlight each year for the school and college teachers who participated in them, just as they had been for earlier generations of teachers in the old days of the Board. There was a sense of pride as well as joy among the readers when attention was drawn each year to the fact that they constituted a faculty of rare distinction, drawn together to grade the papers of an equally distinguished student body.

In May 1960 the number of students taking AP Examinations rose to 10,531; this was 20 times as many as in 1954, when elements of the program were set in place as the so-called Kenyon Plan, and 5 times as many as in 1956, when the examinations were first conducted by the College Board. The number of secondary schools from which the candidates came and the number of colleges they attended were also increasing at a rapid rate. The program appeared to have gained a firm foothold.

With growth came increasing visibility and recognition, including appreciation for its salutary educational effects. In an article in the April 1960 bulletin of the National Association of Secondary School Principals, the authors observed that "the Advanced Placement Program has stimulated an appraisal of the program of studies at all levels—the elementary, secondary, and higher education. This examination and searching of the educational enterprise may well produce desirable improvements and a balance of opportunities for all of our young people."[17]

In a 1961 article in the same journal, titled "Advanced Placement, Present and Future," George Angermann cited five reasons for anticipating continued growth of the program.[18] The increasing selectivity of prestigious institutions, he believed, would cause more and more students to elect AP courses as one means of bolstering their qualifications for admission. Second, he noted that other states were expected to follow the example of New York, which was subsidizing summer institutes to train teachers for Advanced Placement instruction. Third, the idea of special programs for the gifted, Angermann said, was no longer being dismissed as undemocratic. Fourth, college teachers were increasingly placing their stamp of approval on the program, a source of support that was essential for its success. Fifth, Conant was stimulating interest in the program: he declared it to be "one of the most encouraging signs of real import in our educational system" and estimated that 15 percent of all students should be in Advanced Placement courses.

In 1962 the Midwest Administration Center of the University of Chicago undertook to study nationalizing influences on secondary education. College Board programs were examined along with the National Merit Scholarship Corporation program and projects funded by the National Science Foundation (NSF) and the National Defense Education Act (NDEA). A section of the final report that dealt with the Advanced Placement Program concluded with this statement: "If the fact that colleges have been literally forced to accept the Advanced Placement Program courses for credit or placement is any indication of its effect in higher education, one must say that it is effective indeed. If the fact that the CEEB has brought about curricular changes in the comprehensive high school by the successful introduction of the Advanced Placement courses is any indication of its impact on the secondary school, one must conclude that the impact of CEEB is great indeed."[19]

The report also noted, however, that the participation of schools in this program as well as in other College Board programs was found to vary "in the pattern expected"; that is, "the higher the socio-economic level of the community, the greater the participation." The report noted further that "variation according to location was striking, with 75 percent of suburban respondents reporting some participation, while only 13 percent of the rural respondents participated."

Discrepancies between suburban and rural schools in educational opportunities were not the only concerns at the time. In 1961 Conant's book *Slums and Suburbs* made its appearance and received wide attention.[20] In contrast to the hopeful prospects he envisaged for mainstream comprehensive high schools in his 1959 report, *The American High School Today*,[21] Conant painted a bleak picture of schools in the inner cores of the nation's major cities.

It was a picture that Bowles and his fellow officers believed the Board should take account of and do something about. The Demonstration Guidance Project at Junior High School 43 in New York City, cosponsored by the Board in 1956 in cooperation with other agencies, was only one of a number of projects the Board undertook to meet the needs of students who were handicapped in one way or another in their pursuit of education. Although the Advanced Placement Program was pitched at too high a level of academic standards to be readily adapted to meet such needs, Arbolino and his colleagues took at least two steps in this direction. One involved support for the planning and running of a workshop at Hampton Institute in 1965, designed to assist schools in the surrounding area of Virginia in developing courses of Advanced Placement caliber. The other centered on the development and offering in the New York City area of televised Advanced Placement courses in American history and the calculus.

The main thrust of the Board's efforts to expand the use of examinations as a basis for college credit, however, was not to involve the AP Program. It would involve instead a totally new program introduced by the Board in 1965—the College-Level Examination Program, or CLEP, as it was soon called. Like AP, this program owed its existence to a philanthropic organization, but this time it was not the Fund for the Advancement of Education but the Carnegie Corporation of New York, and the vision and impetus behind the enterprise were not those of Eurich and Faust but those of John Gardner, the Carnegie Corporation of New York president.

While an impulse to challenge and change the existing educational order lay behind both the Advanced Placement Program and CLEP, the changes the two programs sought to bring about were quite different. The AP Program challenged the presumption that only college teachers were capable of teaching college courses, claiming that high school teachers were fully capable of teaching such courses. The central importance of teachers, classrooms, and orderly patterns of instruction was not challenged, however, and was in fact strongly affirmed. On the other hand, CLEP dared to insist that the learning acquired in schools and colleges could be acquired outside such settings and without the presence of teachers. While this proposition was one that many teachers would probably accept as valid, it was not one they were likely to rally around with enthusiasm.

Whereas AP was designed to make the educational system work better for able secondary school students who were already well positioned in it, CLEP was designed to make the system accessible to men and women who aspired to a college education and the degree that capped it but found it difficult if not impossible to adapt to the system's demands. The number of such persons grew substantially in the postwar period as the ranks of those with college degrees began to swell, making degrees both more common and more expected. Organizations of various types began gradually to raise the level of education they insisted on for entry or advancement, and although this did not create a problem for those who were able to proceed from school to college and fulfill traditional degree requirements, it posed serious difficulties for others whose circumstances militated against such a stretching out of the portion of their lives that was centered on education.

A notable case in point was the situation of men and women in the armed services. Frequently at posts remote from college campuses, moving from one station to another every few years, and hardly in a position to take a normal load of courses, they found the road to a college degree a formidable obstacle course. The War Department, forerunner of the Department of Defense, began soon after World War II to increase the years of education service personnel were expected to complete; the goal for commissioned officers eventually became a college degree. Responding to the problem it thus helped to create, the War Department took steps to provide educational opportunities for servicemen and servicewomen. In 1943 it established the United States Armed Forces Institute (USAFI) to serve as a central educational resource. In 1946 the American Council on Education (ACE) cooperated by establishing the Commission on Accreditation of Service Experiences (CASE), which provided a link between USAFI and civilian educational institutions; CASE initiated a system of evaluating courses offered within the services and publishing recommendations that many colleges used as the basis for awarding credits to service personnel and veterans who successfully completed these courses.

Another means for service personnel to acquire college credits became available in the fifties when USAFI and ACE collaborated in developing college-level editions of the Tests of General Educational Development (GED). Forms of these standardized tests at the high school level were widely used in awarding high school equivalence diplomas to civilians as well as those in the service, and CASE recommended to colleges that they grant credit to applicants with service experience who performed at certain levels on the college-level tests, which measured writing ability, the ability to read literary passages, and the ability to read passages dealing with the social and natural sciences. The tests were used by some colleges, but many colleges neither used them nor seriously considered their use.

Gardner was concerned not only about the servicemen and servicewomen who faced obstacles in pursuing an undergraduate education but about the civilians, in possibly greater numbers, who confronted similar obstacles. Family and job responsibilities left only a limited amount of time available to take courses; courses were often offered at inconvenient times; and moves from one part of the country to another – increasingly common – sometimes made it impossible for even highly motivated men and women to meet the degree requirements of any one college, no matter how many credits they accumulated at various institutions. In addition, if they learned on their own, taking advantage of opportunities afforded by libraries, bookstores, correspondence courses, televised instruction, adult schools, or employer-sponsored courses, they were seldom able to gain any college credit for the knowledge thus acquired. Gardner wondered if a solution lay in the development of standardized tests that measured the significant outcomes of college courses. Would colleges be willing to accept scores on such tests as evidence that credit toward their degrees should be awarded?

The fact that at least some colleges were already basing awards of credit on the results of AP Examinations was encouraging in this regard. The AP Program was not a pure case of credit by examination, however, since virtually all AP students prepared for the examinations by taking college-level courses offered by their high schools, and this was an important consideration in the eyes of some college officials and faculty members. Still, it was natural for Gardner to approach Bowles about the possibility of the College Board's picking up on the idea he had in mind. Bowles, however, was not responsive.[22] President Chauncey of ETS, on the other hand, responded with enthusiasm when Gardner approached him. He initiated at ETS a Carnegie-funded study of the feasibility of a program of college-level tests. The study, conducted by a committee of college and university officials chaired by Dewey B. Stuit, dean of the University of Iowa College of Liberal Arts, led the committee to conclude that tests of the required kind could be constructed and that enough colleges would probably use them to justify going ahead with their development.

In the next few years an array of objective tests was developed by the ETS test development division, headed at the time by Robert J. Solomon, who later became the executive vice president of ETS. Included were what were called general tests, which covered such broad areas of the first two years of the undergraduate curriculum as English, mathematics, and natural science; also included were subject tests, which measured the outcomes of courses in such subjects as

English composition, introductory calculus, general chemistry, and Western civilization. Named Comprehensive College Tests, they were in published form and ready for colleges to use by 1964. Advised by a group of educators to seek as a sponsor of the tests a national educational association whose membership included colleges and universities, ETS extended an invitation to the College Board to assume such a role.

The College Board meanwhile had been exploring on its own the possibilities of expanding its involvement in college-level examinations beyond the confines of the AP Program. Richard Pearson had succeeded Bowles as president in 1963 and, unlike Bowles, was keenly interested in such a prospect. Soon after assuming office he proposed to the trustees that the staff undertake a major planning effort centered on new services to colleges that included examinations, for a variety of purposes, at upper as well as lower levels of the undergraduate curriculum. The trustees approved, and Pearson assigned to Arbolino the task of preparing a comprehensive plan.

In its final form the plan focused on two major problems that many colleges were concerned about at the time. One problem concerned the admission and handling of students who sought to transfer from one institution to another, in many instances from a two-year institution to a four-year institution. The second problem involved applicants for admission, older than the typical college freshman, who while they had not attended any college had nevertheless acquired knowledge one way or another that was comparable with that taught in college courses. Although it was conjectured that the number of such individuals was very large, there were actually few hard data available about them. There was even a certain amount of uncertainty about what to call them; in the plan they were referred to as "unaffiliated students."[23]

The plan, approved by the trustees, was set in motion by the appointment of a new standing committee called the Council on College-Level Examinations. Lawrence H. Chamberlain, vice president of Columbia University, was appointed chairman of this body, and Stuit was appointed vice chairman. Among the 10 other members were two faculty members: John S. Karling, professor of biological sciences at Purdue University, and Izaak Wirszup, professor of mathematics at the University of Chicago.

As almost its first order of business, the council voted to accept the ETS suggestion that the College Board sponsor the administration of the Comprehensive College Tests, and these tests, renamed College-Level Examinations, became the core of the Board's new program of

CLEP examinations. In 1965 the Carnegie Corporation of New York awarded the first of a series of grants to the Board to further develop the set of examinations and to promote their acceptance and use by colleges; the total funding by Carnegie eventually exceeded $3 million.

The mainstay of the program from the beginning was the battery of general examinations in the five areas of English, mathematics, humanities, natural science, and social science. They served essentially the same purpose served by the college-level GED tests mentioned earlier; once they were available, USAFI made the same type of arrangements for administering them to service personnel that it had made earlier for the GED tests. The Commission on Accreditation of Service Experiences also made recommendations to colleges regarding use of the CLEP General Examinations that echoed those it had made with respect to the GED tests. In 1965–66, the first operational year for CLEP, USAFI administered one or more CLEP examinations to more than 40,000 present or former servicemen and servicewomen. This use of CLEP by the armed services gave the program a running start.

It was one thing, however, to have a ready-made clientele of men and women in uniform, and another thing to create a clientele of civilians, particularly civilians who were "unaffiliated students." "A major problem still facing the program," rued a piece in the *College Board Review*, "is getting the unaffiliated student to come forward to seek the credit for which he may be qualified."[24] To make CLEP examinations available to this target group, in 1967 testing centers open to all comers were established in 50 urban centers throughout the country. At these centers, located at colleges or universities, arrangements were made to administer the tests one day a month to anybody who showed up. So few showed up the first few months that Arbolino, who was in charge of the program, became the butt of taunts by his colleagues. Passing him in the hall, one reported, "I think I spotted a CLEP candidate for you yesterday in New Jersey."

Undaunted, Arbolino and a small band of CLEP supporters undertook to bring the program to the attention of potential candidates. An early effort involved public-service announcements in New York City subway cars; eventually there were large-scale mailings, ads in popular magazines, and spot radio and television announcements. One TV message, sponsored by The Advertising Council, drew widespread attention, both favorable and unfavorable. It depicted Abraham Lincoln undergoing an interview in an employment agency and being advised that his lack of a college degree would probably prevent him from pursuing whatever career he had in mind.

The number of civilians taking CLEP examinations finally began to grow and at an ever-increasing rate. Favorable circumstances in the late sixties and early seventies included a burst of efforts in this country and abroad to create new avenues to undergraduate degrees for various categories of so-called nontraditional students. Notable among these efforts were Britain's Open University, the Regents External Degree Program and Empire State College in New York, Minnesota Metropolitan College, Evergreen State College in Washington State, and the University of Mid-America. Lending support to these initiatives through their recommendations were several national study groups including the so-called Newman committee of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education, and the Commission on Non-traditional Study, a group jointly sponsored by the College Board and ETS and funded in part by the Carnegie Corporation of New York.

Public libraries in Dallas, St. Louis, Miami, and other major cities made special efforts to acquaint readers with CLEP; the College Board joined with the Council on Library Resources and the National Endowment for the Humanities to sponsor the Library Independent Study and Guidance Project. In St. Louis a director of special programs for adults at the University of Missouri became a "circuit rider" as she sought out men and women in the area who she thought might benefit from CLEP. Her catch included a data processor, farmer, meat cutter, meter reader, minister, pizza maker, solderer, and waitress.[25]

Taking CLEP examinations was one step toward receiving college credit; a second necessary step was finding a college willing to grant credit on the basis of the test scores obtained, and Arbolino and his colleagues devoted a large portion of their efforts to persuading colleges to establish CLEP policies and practices. While many colleges and universities responded by agreeing to consider CLEP scores, relatively few institutions – large tax-supported ones in the main – actively promoted the use of CLEP. At these institutions there was almost always present a key administrative officer who was enthusiastic about the program and able through powers of office or persuasion not only to establish but to publicize policies favoring the use of CLEP. It was usually necessary to overcome a certain amount of faculty resistance to the idea of using CLEP examinations as a basis for credit. After talking with members of the English department at one college, Arbolino complained that "even John Milton, if he appeared at the door, would be told he had to take freshman composition."

Still, Arbolino was able to report in 1975, 10 years after the program's inception, that "the overall picture" was "very good."[26] In 1974–75 more than 88,000 civilian candidates had taken more than a quarter million CLEP examinations. In quantitative terms CLEP had outstripped its older cousin, the Advanced Placement Program; in 1975 the number of students taking AP Examinations was approximately 66,000, and the number of examinations taken was approximately 86,000.

The reason for regarding CLEP and the AP Program as cousins was that both programs involved the use of examinations as a basis for granting college credit. Perceptions of the closeness of the relationship thus established varied considerably, however. To some educators, including College Board officials, the two programs were perceived to be closely bound together as members of the same credit-by-examination family. To others, however, including many secondary school and college teachers, the differences between the two programs stood out more conspicuously than did their similarities, and they were viewed as very distant cousins, if cousins at all. A major difference was that while secondary school teachers were active participants in the AP Program as teachers of AP courses, as members of committees responsible for course descriptions and examinations, and as readers of examination papers, they played no such roles in CLEP.

As long as CLEP examinations were taken by persons whose high school years were behind them – the nontraditional learners for whom the program was designed – there was no reason for secondary school teachers to be concerned about, or even aware of, the program. Many of the colleges and universities that awarded credit on the basis of CLEP examinations, however, did not confine their use of the tests to particular categories of applicants and chose instead to adopt policies that made credit based on CLEP scores available to all applicants, in some cases to enrolled students as well. The result was that increasing numbers of secondary school students, while still in school or shortly after graduating, began to take CLEP examinations. This development was welcomed by those who were in favor of making college education more accessible, less time-consuming, and less costly to both students and taxpayers. It was a source of concern, however, to school administrators and teachers who valued the AP Program, because it seemed to them to undermine the curriculum component of AP. It puzzled as well as annoyed them that the College Board was sponsoring a program in seeming competition with AP.

The use of CLEP tests as well as AP Examinations for granting credit to recent secondary school graduates raised other issues. While not all colleges adopted the practice of using both programs – some dealt only with applicants who had taken one or the other of the two kinds of examinations – other institutions did adopt such a practice, and they faced the question of dealing equitably with the applicants who sought credit based on AP and those who sought credit based on CLEP. The question was perplexing; not only were the examinations different in nature and in the subject matter they encompassed, but there were no data available to compare the performance of students on Advanced Placement and CLEP examinations. The College Board therefore initiated steps to determine the relationships that existed between the two sets of examinations. For each subject area special committees were appointed whose members were drawn from the committees responsible for the development of Advanced Placement and CLEP examinations and in some cases Achievement Tests as well. The new committees, called discipline committees, drew up analytic descriptions of the different examinations offered in their particular areas, and these were made available to school and college officials and faculty members. The committees also participated in the development of questions for common use in both Advanced Placement and CLEP examinations in the several subjects for which this was feasible.

Another question that arose concerned the extent to which the College Board should promote as well as permit the use of CLEP by secondary school students. The question was awkward for the Board because of the continuing emphasis in its publications on the program's service to nontraditional learners, its original target group. A more significant difficulty was that the two programs embodied different values and priorities, as well as different perspectives regarding the Board's role with respect to the secondary school curriculum. For several years the Board deliberately refrained from efforts to inform secondary school students about CLEP. The interest of many institutions in making CLEP available to such students, however, eventually contributed to a reversal of this position, and publicity about CLEP began to be directed toward secondary schools.

A question that no doubt would have arisen about CLEP whether AP was in the picture or not, but that was complicated by AP's existence, was the extent to which the Board should sponsor not only CLEP examinations but the production and distribution of information and materials designed to help persons prepare for such examinations. The strongest arguments for moving in this direction came from the librarians who became involved during CLEP's early years in bringing the program to the attention of adults fitting the definition of "unaffiliated students." They could not see any point in encouraging such persons to take the examinations without also offering them useful advice about what books and other materials to read. On the other hand, the officers of the Board and of ETS who continued to believe that the only legitimate function of a standardized testing program was to measure – the AP Program represented a unique exception to the rule – saw the point clearly. The Board did make several abortive attempts to develop self-instructional materials; it settled eventually for descriptions of the tests that included some suggested readings.

An odd aspect was that CLEP examinations, although intended primarily to measure what nontraditional learners had learned over time through nontraditional means, with few exceptions mirrored the content of traditional college courses taught in the traditional classroom mode. Truly nontraditional learners were hard put to compete with students who took an appropriate course in a classroom setting and then took the examination while what they learned was more remembered than forgotten.

In a general reorganization of standing committees in 1973, the Council on College-Level Examinations and the Advanced Placement Committee were discharged and replaced by a single group, the Council on College-Level Services. Some members of each of the former bodies expressed concerns that the Board was failing to be responsive to the values unique to each program. For a brief period the Board's officers considered conducting both Advanced Placement and CLEP examinations within the framework of a single program of college-level examinations, but this approach was abandoned when it became apparent that it did not appeal to strong proponents and users of each program. Promotional and informational materials that linked the two programs were eventually discontinued.

From 1975 on, the number of candidates taking CLEP examinations began to decline while AP continued to forge ahead. The decline was particularly steep with respect to the General Examinations. By the end of the decade the number of candidates taking these examinations was half what it was in the peak year of 1974–75. There appeared to be many reasons for the decline, including a dampening of enthusiasm for nontraditional approaches to undergraduate education as traditional values began to assert themselves again in higher education as well as in the nation as a whole. Faculty members who had gone along with policies of granting credit based on CLEP examinations – policies frequently initiated by institutional or state officials – began to complain about such policies and to find fault with the examinations.

The General Examinations came under particularly heavy fire. In a 1977 article in *Change* magazine titled "CLEP and the Great Credit Giveaway," Carl A. Stecher, a professor of English at Salem State College, found fault with the General Examinations on a number of grounds including their content, brevity, and norms. He criticized the English Composition General Examination on the basis of the familiar charge that it made exclusive use of multiple-choice questions.[27]

The College-Level Examination Program was not without its defenders. At a colloquium on credit by examination sponsored by the College Board in 1979, C. A. VanderWerf, a professor of chemistry at the University of Florida, described the results of a study at his institution that showed that students granted credit based on CLEP examinations compared favorably with other students in their grades in subsequent courses and in the percentages who graduated. VanderWerf had made it a point to meet and talk with students who had taken advantage of the opportunities afforded them by CLEP, and he suggested that there was more to praise than to criticize about a program that gave students such opportunities.[28]

That CLEP faced hurdles in the eighties in gaining further acceptance and use by college faculty members and officials was not surprising if one considered how far the program asked them to go in departing from traditional assumptions about the meaning of college credits and of college degrees.

What was perhaps surprising was to find the AP Program faring so well when one reflected on the extent to which it represented a reincarnation of the original entrance examination program of the College Board, a program that many in the forties thought was as extinct as the dinosaur.

7. Another Echo from the Past: The Commission on Mathematics

In the archives of the College Board there is a fading copy of an old press release. It is dated 15 December 1955, and it begins: "A Commission on Mathematics that will investigate the need for revision of the secondary school mathematics curriculum has been appointed by the College Board."[1] While the release goes on to answer questions about this new development, it also raises questions. Why, for example, was the announcement being made in December, when as the release reveals, the commission had been appointed more than six months before, had held its first meeting in August, and was obviously well under way? Also, why the emphasis on investigating the need for a curriculum revision, when it was clear from the release that the commission did not have any doubts at all about the need for such a revision and was concentrating all its attention on meeting this need? Why, in short, was the Board acting so skittish about this particular development?

For a plausible explanation one can start by recalling how rooted the position of Bowles and Fels became on the question of the relationship between the Board and the curriculum. This position, adhered to firmly, was that it was not the business of the Board's tests or, by extension, of the Board itself to influence the secondary school curriculum in any way. Bowles drew a sharp distinction in this regard between the original College Board and the modern College Board: whereas the former was a standardizing agency, the latter was primarily a service agency and its concerns about standards did not extend beyond the standards related to its service operations. Pressed by members of the Committee on Examinations in 1952 to acknowledge the educational significance of the Achievement Tests, Bowles had declared the position of the Board's officers to be that "it is not a presently defined function of the Board to set curricular patterns." To come right out three years later and say bluntly that the Board was engaged in a determined effort through its Commission on Mathematics to introduce modern mathematics into the curriculum could sound distinctly contradictory.

Public relations was probably an additional consideration. It would appear that Bowles continued to be haunted by the hostility that many public school administrators exhibited toward the Board, some of which he attributed to the Board's old program of written examinations based on published definitions of requirements. At the same time he was aware that there were many private school heads and teachers who strongly disapproved of the Board's almost total reliance on multiple-choice questions. A major defense of such questions was that they sampled student knowledge so broadly and fairly as to leave teachers free to teach as they wished, and that it was important for the College Board to give them this freedom. A policy of noninterference with the curriculum served as a shield against criticisms from both directions.

It is also fair to say that the Commission on Mathematics was only one of many subjects on the minds of Bowles and Fels at the time and that other matters were of greater concern to them. During this period of the Board's history both Bowles and Fels were intensely preoccupied with a variety of processes affecting what was referred to as the transition of students from school to college. These included talent identification, precollege guidance, admissions testing, selective admissions, financial aid awards, and college course placement. To most of those active in the Board's affairs these processes were of more compelling interest than were issues of educational substance and standards.

If the various ways in which the idea of a Commission on Mathematics rubbed against the grain of College Board policy, public relations strategy, and preoccupation with process make it understandable that Bowles was not eager to trumpet the commission's birth, they also make it a point of wonder that the commission was ever appointed in the first place. While not quite a miracle, the commission became a reality only because of a remarkable confluence of circumstances that were in its favor.

By the middle fifties concerns were rising steadily within the public as well as among elected government leaders that the nation's schools were not educating enough scientists and engineers to meet the industrial and defense needs of postwar America. Sharing this concern were eminent mathematicians at major universities. They viewed with alarm the wide gulf that was developing between the secondary school mathematics curriculum, which had hardly changed in more than 50 years, and the mathematics taught in leading colleges and universities, which was constantly undergoing transformations as the result of advances in both theory and applications.

One of the first opportunities for concerned mathematicians to work together in an organized attack on the problem was provided by the School and College Study of Admission with Advanced Standing (discussed in chapter 6), forerunner to the Advanced Placement Program. The SCSAAS committee, which was appointed in 1952 to develop a course description in mathematics, took a broad view of its assignment. The committee not only described a college-level course in calculus and analytic geometry for high schools to teach in the twelfth grade, but went on to offer recommendations regarding instruction in the tenth and eleventh grades as well. The national reputations of the committee members made it an unusually impressive group. Known as the Brinkmann committee because of its chairman, H. W. Brinkmann of Swarthmore, it included such other well-known mathematicians as Edward Begle of Yale, Garrett Birkhoff of Harvard, and George B. Thomas, Jr., of M.I.T. Although not officially a member, Albert W. Tucker of Princeton was persuaded by the others to join them in their deliberations when they met in Princeton.

Although the Brinkmann committee, through its course description, advanced standing examination, and various recommendations, influenced directly the instructional programs of very few schools – in 1955 not quite 300 students took the mathematics examination – it stirred up considerable interest among school and college teachers of mathematics. One group that followed with special interest what the Brinkmann committee was proposing was the Committee of Examiners responsible for the Board's Achievement Tests in Intermediate and Advanced Mathematics. Members of this committee shared the conviction of the Brinkmann committee that mathematics teaching needed to be updated, and they were equally eager to participate in efforts to bring about changes in the curriculum. It seemed to them, however, that the Achievement Tests in mathematics, particularly the Advanced Mathematics Test, might well be having just the opposite effect by reinforcing traditional teaching approaches.

At the annual meeting of the Committee of Examiners in August 1954, the members devoted a full day to discussing their concerns about the content of the Advanced Mathematics Tests, which continued to emphasize algebra, trigonometry, and solid geometry. Participating were all members of the committee: Chairman Edwin C. Douglas, The Taft School, Watertown, Connecticut; Robert P. Dilworth, the California Institute of Technology, Pasadena; Maurice L. Hartung, the University of Chicago; Cletus O. Oakley, Haverford College, Pennsylvania; and Paul J. Smith, East High School, Rochester, New York.

Participating as a consultant to ETS on statistical questions related to the Board's tests was Samuel W. Wilks of Princeton University; several ETS staff members also took an active part.

Committee members cited additional topics they thought the Advanced Mathematics Test should cover, including inequalities, the absolute value concept, permutations and combinations, simple probability, and variation. When an ETS staff member observed that hundreds of small schools did not teach these topics, a committee member argued that "since the test does influence teaching and the curriculum, and since the colleges do take into account the type and size of school from which a candidate comes when considering his application and his test scores, we should not hold back but rather move in the direction of more advanced topics."[2] Another committee member made the point that "more mathematics has been produced in this century than in all others combined, and yet none of the modern mathematics has seeped into the schools."[3]

The suggestion was put forth that an additional Achievement Test might be devised to include the advanced topics that at least some schools were teaching. While agreeing that this possibility deserved consideration, the committee concluded that the whole matter should be brought to the attention of the College Board. One committee member asserted that the College Board was "unquestionably a policymaking group and hence should do something to push this sort of thing ahead."[4]

It was not unusual for examiner committees to think that the College Board should "do something" about one or another of their concerns. Most committees had only a hazy notion of the Board and the way it operated, however. Although members were appointed by the Board, they carried out their assignments – conducted in conformity with ETS test-development procedures – in close cooperation with ETS personnel, and their meetings were held at ETS. Committee members rarely served as representatives of their institutions at College Board meetings or as members of committees influential in setting policy or making important decisions. Nevertheless, there were occasional exceptions to these generalizations, and the mathematics committee was a notable exception. Douglas was not only chairman of the committee but one of three school and college faculty members who had been invited to serve as members of the Board's Committee on Examinations. He was therefore in a strategic position to bring his committee's frustrations directly to the attention of the appropriate standing committee and at the same time to the attention of the Board's officers.

Another fateful circumstance then came into play: the chairman of the Committee on Examinations at the time was Albert E. Meder, Jr., who was not only the dean of administration at Rutgers University but also a member of the mathematics faculty. He listened with special interest to what Douglas had to say about the concerns of the mathematics examiners, and when someone suggested that it might be a good idea for him to meet with Douglas and other members of the mathematics committee for a further discussion of these concerns, he accepted with alacrity.

Meder had an unusually rich background of association with the College Board. As a high school student in New Jersey he had taken College Board examinations in each of his last three years in order to gain admission to Columbia. He had studied mathematics under Fiske, the longtime secretary of the College Board, first as an undergraduate and later as a graduate student, and from a distance he had been aware of Butler's presence and had heard the gossip and controversy that the man seemed constantly to stimulate. After receiving his degree, Meder joined the Columbia faculty; it was not long before he came to know Bowles. Since his administrative responsibilities when he later moved to Rutgers included admissions, he and Bowles had occasion to remain in touch with one another. In 1953 Bowles invited him to present a paper on the current status of college admissions at the first of the series of admissions colloquiums sponsored by the Board.[5]

As a mathematician Meder was thoroughly familiar with the history of the Board's examinations in mathematics. He knew about the commissions the Board had appointed from time to time in the prewar years to consider and recommend changes in the definitions of requirements on which the examinations were based. He had a vivid memory of the Commission on Mathematics that had recommended in the 1930s what were called Alpha, Beta, and Gamma examinations for students with two, three, and four years of mathematics. He recognized the pattern thus set in the latest combination of mathematical tests—the mathematical section of the SAT and the Intermediate Mathematics and Advanced Mathematics Achievement Tests.

Meder could recall that this earlier commission was held in high regard by mathematicians because they viewed it as countering the efforts of "social utility" proponents to restrict the teaching of mathematics in the schools to elementary skills that were useful in everyday life. Through the commission the Board had helped to maintain a three- or four-year sequence of mathematics courses in the secondary school curriculum. If the Board had thus responded to an earlier crisis in mathematics education, was it not time for the Board now to take comparable steps in response to the current crisis? It was a natural and obvious question, at least as far as Meder was concerned, and he proposed to Bowles that a new Commission on Mathematics be appointed. He found Bowles willing to listen but hard to convince. In the end, however, Bowles went along with the proposal.[6] Meder, after all, was not only the chairman of an important standing committee but a respected colleague of long standing.

A special meeting to discuss the situation in mathematics was held at ETS on 21 January 1955. Participants included Meder, Fels, Douglas, one other member of the mathematics committee, and several ETS staff members. Various possibilities were discussed of either introducing new tests or altering the content of existing tests, but it was concluded that radical test changes should not be made until changes taking place in the teaching of mathematics became more widespread. In the meantime, Fels reported, the Board was ready to take certain initiatives designed to speed up the change process.[7]

In early 1955 a formal proposal to the Executive Committee from the Committee on Examinations that a commission be appointed was acted on favorably. Soon after, Bowles and Meder arranged to meet at the Columbia faculty club to consider plans for the commission. They were joined by Howard F. Fehr, a professor at Teachers College, Columbia University, and a leading authority on mathematics education. They agreed that Tucker should be invited to serve as chairman, and later, after he accepted the appointment, he was consulted about possible members. As finally constituted, the Commission on Mathematics included representatives of both secondary and higher education. It also included leading figures in mathematics and mathematics education. Its membership was as follows:

Albert W. Tucker, Princeton University, New Jersey, *Chairman*
Carl B. Allendoerfer, University of Washington, Seattle
Edwin C. Douglas, The Taft School, Watertown, Connecticut
Howard F. Fehr, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York
Martha Hildebrandt, Proviso Township High School, Maywood, Illinois
Albert E. Meder, Jr., Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey, New Brunswick
Frederick Mosteller, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts
Eugene P. Northrop, University of Chicago, Illinois
Ernest R. Ranucci, Weequahic High School, Newark, New Jersey

Robert E. K. Rourke, Kent School, Kent, Connecticut
George B. Thomas, Jr., Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge
Henry Van Engen, Iowa State Teachers College, Cedar Falls
Samuel W. Wilks, Princeton University, New Jersey

Meder and Douglas were considered ex officio members of the commission because of their positions as chairmen, respectively, of the Committee on Examinations and the Committee of Examiners for the Achievement Tests in Mathematics. When Meder's term as chairman of the Committee on Examinations expired in 1956, his successor, Morris Meister, principal of the Bronx High School of Science, assumed this ex officio position on the commission. Meder continued to participate, however. He served as executive director of the commission while on leave from Rutgers from January 1957 to July 1958, and when Robert E. K. Rourke succeeded him in this role in August 1958, he was appointed a regular member.

To support the commission as it began its work, arrangements were made for Robert Kalin, a member of the test-development staff of ETS, to handle administrative matters on a half-time basis in space provided by ETS. When Meder assumed the full-time position of executive director in 1957, an office for the commission was established by the Board in its New York headquarters.

The Commission on Mathematics was the first commission appointed by the Board in more than 20 years – ever since the older program of written entrance examinations had been abandoned. While reminiscent of earlier commissions, it differed from them in two important respects: (1) All the earlier commissions had functioned in conjunction with the Board's program of entrance examinations; their purpose was to revise the definitions of requirements on which the examinations were based. This new commission, however, was specifically instructed to function without regard for the Board's Achievement Tests in Mathematics. (2) Recommendations of earlier commissions were always subject to the active review, revision, and possible rejection by other Board-appointed committees as well as by the membership as a whole. This was not true of the new commission; once launched, it flew entirely free of any restraints imposed by its parental body, at least with respect to the substance of its work and recommendations. The relationship of the Commission on Mathematics to the College Board could appropriately be described as highly tangential.

The commission met for the first time at Ann Arbor, Michigan, in

August 1955; by the time this meeting ended, a blueprint had been established for its subsequent work. Agreement was reached on the following points:

1. The revisions necessary in the teaching of mathematics involved the elimination or reorganization of some topics widely taught and the addition of other topics.

2. The important consideration in deleting or adding a topic was its relevance to modern mathematics, social and natural science, and engineering.

3. Liaison with and cooperation with all groups interested in the secondary school mathematics curriculum was essential.

4. Development of a single definitive syllabus was undesirable; the Commission's objective would be to formulate a broad list of topics and to suggest where and how they might be introduced.[8]

The commission continued to meet periodically to review its progress, discuss issues at hand, and plan its next steps. Following the meeting in Michigan, the commission met twice in New York City and four times in Princeton, where Tucker acted as host. The last meeting took place in New York City in January 1958. Invited to attend the meetings were mathematicians who were active in the work of other reform-minded groups; in this way the commission remained in close touch with such groups as the Curriculum Committee of the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, the University of Illinois Committee on School Mathematics, the Science Teaching Improvement Program of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the Committee on the Undergraduate Program of the Mathematical Association of America, the American Society for Engineering Education, and the National Research Council.

The substance of the commission's work was accomplished between its meetings by a few members who, sometimes working together on writing teams and sometimes working alone, produced a steady stream of publications. Some of these were pamphlets on specific topics. In 1957 three pamphlets were issued on modern mathematics and its place in the secondary school, the education of secondary school mathematics teachers, and the mathematics taught in the seventh and eighth grades. In 1958 four more pamphlets followed: The first described the commission and its work; the second, on modernizing the mathematics curriculum, was directed specifically toward school superintendents and members of school boards; the third was on sets, relations, and functions; and the fourth was on algebra from the point of view of mathematical structure. Of two additional pamphlets issued in 1959 one dealt with concepts of equation and inequality, the other with informal deduction in algebra and the properties of odd and even numbers.

In a 1959 article in *The Mathematics Teacher*, Meder summarized what he thought the commission aimed for in the teaching of mathematics:

> The objective is to develop mathematical insight, power, and understanding; to lead pupils to think as a mathematician would think; to develop the background of knowledge and meaning that will enable a pupil to solve problems that are not exactly like the type of problem that has been solved for him in the classroom or in the textbook; to help him to deal precisely with precise ideas, and to express them correctly and preferably concisely; to deal with symbols, not like checkers on a board to be moved in accordance with predetermined and memorized rules, but as aids to thought, full of meanings and denoting the power to look at a line of mathematical symbols and interpret them, to tell what they mean.[9]

Awareness of, and interest in, the work of the commission spread rapidly. An initial mailing list of 200, among them officers of organizations and associations known to have a special interest in mathematics education, grew to over 13,000 as expressions of interest poured in. Letters were received from all over the world – from London, Paris, Warsaw, Lagos, Brisbane, Honolulu, and Rio de Janeiro. Numerous requests came from educational bodies for speakers or panelists to represent the commission at various gatherings, requests that commission members fulfilled whenever possible. These occasions were enlivened in some instances by criticisms directed at the commission's recommendations. A persistent critic was Morris Kline, a professor at New York University. His major complaint was that the commission was overemphasizing theoretical aspects of mathematics and was failing to focus attention on significant applications, particularly in the physical sciences.

The commission issued two major publications: a combined student text and teacher's guide titled *Introductory Probability and Statistical Inference*[10] and the commission's final report, *Program for College Preparatory Mathematics*.[11] The origins of the publication on statistics lay in the increasing interest of mathematicians in statistical theory and the expanding use of statistics by social scientists. In a 1958 article about the commission, Meder pointed out that "in twentieth-century living statistical inference is at least as important as deductive reasoning, and affects all of us daily."[12] One of the commission's recommendations was that schools consider offering a one-semester course in probability and statistics as an option.

In its final report the commission set forth its arguments for believing that the nation needed to develop a substantially larger body of mathematically literate people and that this required substantial revisions in the content of the secondary school mathematics curriculum and in teaching approaches. The commission stressed that it envisioned not a complete tearing out of existing programs by their roots but, rather, extensive modifications of the traditional curriculum. It presented a nine-point program for college-capable students:

1. Strong preparation, *both* in concepts *and* in skills, for college mathematics at the level of calculus and analytic geometry.
2. Understanding of the nature and role of deductive reasoning — in algebra as well as in geometry.
3. Appreciation of mathematical structure ("patterns") — for example, properties of natural, real, and complex numbers.
4. Judicious use of unifying ideas — sets, variables, functions, and relations.
5. Treatment of inequalities along with equations.
6. Incorporation with plane geometry of some coordinate geometry, and essentials of solid geometry and space perception.
7. Introduction in grade 11 of fundamental trigonometry — centered on coordinates, vectors, and complex numbers.
8. Emphasis in grade 12 on elementary functions (polynomial, exponential, circular).
9. Recommendation of additional alternative units for grade 12: *either* introductory probability with statistical applications, *or* an introduction to modern algebra.[13]

At the College Board's Annual Meeting in October 1958, several months before the commission's final report became available, Tucker was invited to speak about the work and the recommendations of the commission. Following his presentation and a period of discussion, in which commission members Meder and Rourke also participated, it was unanimously voted "that the report of the Commission on Mathematics be received with thanks to its authors, and that the report be warmly commended to the attention of the schools and colleges."[14]

While the commission's recommendations were no doubt of some interest to the representatives of the schools, colleges, and educational associations that constituted the Board's membership, they were mainly of interest to those who were more directly concerned with the teaching of mathematics. The final report of the commission includes this observation:

> This action of the Board [appointment of the commission] constituted a frank attempt to influence the secondary school curriculum. Influence is being exercised, however, only through the work of the mathematicians, teachers of mathematics, and teachers of teachers of mathematics who are on the Commission, and not at all through direct action of the Board or its standing committees, which are composed largely of administrative officers—deans, principals, and admissions officers. Further, the Board considered and rejected the possibility of a sudden change in its mathematics examinations in favor of an exploration of curriculum improvement which could become the guide for a gradual change in examination practice.
>
> In other words, the Board's action was designed to bring to bear on the problem of the mathematics curriculum the considered judgment of persons professionally concerned with it. Thus, in setting up the Commission on Mathematics, the Board remained true to its highest function as an agency in which school and college representatives are brought together to discuss, develop, and implement policies with respect to students' transition from school to college.[15]

In his foreword to the commission's report, Bowles was characteristically gracious in giving full credit to Dean Meder and Professors Fehr and Tucker for playing what he referred to as "prime mover" roles. He described the work of the commission as "an extraordinary and inspiring example of cooperative educational effort."[16]

Queries and requests related to the recommendations and publications continued to be addressed to the office of the commission for more than a year after it was formally discharged. It was therefore arranged for a few members to function as a steering committee, and Julius H. Hlavaty, head of the mathematics department of DeWitt Clinton High School in New York City, was appointed to serve as a full-time consultant on a leave-of-absence basis. In this way the life of the commission lingered, and as a consequence, Board staff members found themselves listening to accounts of developments in the field of mathematics education as well as talking about testing and the admissions process.

In 1965 all but two members of the commission gathered for a reunion, 10 years after its appointment. Invited to attend were members of committees of examiners in mathematics and a few College Board and ETS staff members. Discussion centered, naturally, on the impact of the commission's recommendations. In a speech that Meder gave later he summarized the gist of the discussion:

> While there were no votes and no pronouncements—the Commission, of course, has long since been discharged—I think it safe to say that the consensus was to reaffirm the Report with perhaps four reservations. The first of these is that had the Commission been able to foresee the pace at which certain developments have taken place, it might have made a somewhat more encouraging statement about high school calculus; there was no disposition, however, to change its expressed warning against "premature general acceptance of a curricular responsibility for which all too few schools are now adequately prepared."
>
> The second reservation has to do with the Twelfth Grade program; probably today even more flexibility would be suggested. The third is that the Commission was probably slightly too optimistic as to the coverage that could be secured in the Eleventh Grade; it underestimated the time most teachers find they must give to review.
>
> Finally, the statements concerning the mathematical preparation of elementary school teachers, strong as they are, should probably have been even stronger.[17]

In a letter to a College Board official several years after the commission had ceased to exist, Professor Tucker commented that the College Board "initiated this fine effort well before the need was fully realized."[18] It does appear that timing was a significant factor in the amount of attention the commission attracted. Its work was under way two years before the launching of Sputnik I and long before the creation of the School Mathematics Study Group (SMSG), under the direction of Professor Begle of Yale. Begle gave full credit to the commission for laying the ground for the SMSG. It was not long, however, before this group, with substantial funding provided by the National Science Foundation, soon eclipsed the commission as a source of ideas and materials for reforming the mathematics curriculum.

While good timing helps to explain the stir the commission created, it was by no means the only factor. The prominence and the influence of mathematicians who served on the commission and the depth of their commitment to the commission's work were important elements in its success. The scholarly quality of its publications also contributed to the amount and kind of attention they attracted.

It is difficult to determine to what extent the commission's association with the College Board affected the influence it exercised. What the College Board did tangibly for the commission was to give it a setting within a national educational body, support it with administrative and secretarial services, publish and distribute its printed materials, and, not least, pay its bills. To do the last, the Board drew mainly on its own funds but also on grants totaling $175,000, which Bowles solicited from the Carnegie Corporation of New York.

The consequences for the Board of its sponsorship of the Commission on Mathematics were profound. The commission changed the climate of opinion among the Board's leaders from doubt about the propriety of the Board's taking any position toward the curriculum other than a neutral, passive one to an active interest and involvement in curriculum change. Bowles was so impressed by the highly favorable reception generally accorded the commission, and the almost total absence of the criticisms he thought it might provoke, that he turned his attention to the possibility of a second commission directed toward strengthening the secondary school curriculum.

Without the presence of the Commission on Mathematics it is doubtful that the framers of the Board's charter at the time it was incorporated would have thought to set forth as one of its purposes "to further the development of representative opinion with respect to educational standards."[19] From 1957 on, it was not only legitimate but obligatory for the Board to interfere in the curriculum.

The commission came about because of complaints by the mathematics examiners that the Advanced Mathematics Achievement Test was not measuring, and was holding teachers back from teaching, what they believed mathematics teachers should be teaching. The Board's creation of the commission was generally accepted by the examiners as a satisfactory response to their concerns. A question left up in the air, however, was the extent to which the Achievement Tests themselves, in mathematics and in other subjects, should properly bear some of the burden of furthering "the development of representative opinion with respect to educational standards."

8. One Commission Leads to Another: The Commission on English

The Commission on Mathematics was a source of considerable satisfaction to President Bowles. Pleasantly surprised by the attention the commission attracted, he began to wonder as its work drew to a close if there was another, comparable venture the College Board might undertake. There was little question which segment of the curriculum to tackle next; almost all signs pointed to English. Not only was English taught to more students by more secondary school teachers than was any other subject; the students who took the Board's examinations in English far outnumbered those examined in any other subject.

There were also reasons apart from sheer numbers for focusing on English. Complaints about the inability of students to write effectively were widespread among educators and citizens alike. Graduate and professional schools criticized undergraduate colleges, which criticized secondary schools, which criticized the lower schools. Public concerns about why young Americans couldn't read or write created a ready market for books offering explanations and solutions.

Within the College Board there were special reasons for fixing attention on English. The experiment with the two-hour General Composition Test, which was expected to demonstrate that essays could be graded reliably, had ended in failure in 1956, leaving the Board once again with a test of writing ability that used multiple-choice questions almost exclusively. Some forms of the English Composition Achievement Test did include a so-called interlinear exercise, which required students to correct on their own the mistakes embedded in a deliberately mangled prose passage. This failed, however, to satisfy critics who believed that the ability to edit, while important, was only one component of writing ability. The chorus grew of those who complained about the Board's apparent indifference to the importance of its tests in encouraging or discouraging the teaching of writing.

Joining this chorus in the late 1950s were the presidents of several private New England institutions, including Calvin Hastings Plimpton of Amherst and Alfred Whitney Griswold of Yale. Alarmed by the inability of even their carefully selected students to write competently, they decided it was time once again for the College Board member colleges to exercise some influence over the teaching of writing in the schools by getting writing back in the Board's examinations.

Since the presidents had no direct association with the College Board – most college presidents designated the director of admissions or some other official to represent the institution at College Board meetings – they enlisted as their spokesman the dean of admissions at Amherst College, Eugene S. Wilson. Wilson was well known and highly respected within the community of admissions officers. He enjoyed writing and speaking out on matters related to college admissions and had built up a ready audience because of his special ability to enlighten, shock, and entertain.

Wilson decided there was no point in proposing another test because the Board was apparently boxed in by its inability to develop a writing test that met its statistical criteria and by its unwillingness to offer any test that fell short of these criteria. He therefore hit on the idea of asking students at test centers to write one-hour essays, or writing samples, which the Board would simply reproduce and send, ungraded, to colleges that wanted them. When he broached this idea to the Board's officers, their reaction was a mixture of disbelief, dismay, and indignation. A cornerstone of the Board's Admissions Testing Program, as far as they were concerned, was its psychometric soundness, and here was Wilson proposing something that was devoid of psychometrics – that was not a test at all!

Bowles declared the Writing Sample to be "an intellectually indefensible monstrosity."[1]

The Committee on Examinations, the trustees, and the officers of ETS all agreed that this was one idea whose time should never come. Nevertheless, the College Board was a membership association, and it was agreed that Wilson as the representative of a member institution had every right to bring his proposal before the representatives of other member institutions for their consideration and action. Arrangements were therefore made for him to address the gathered representatives at their Annual Meeting in October 1959.

In the case he made for the Writing Sample, Wilson shrewdly stressed not only the salutary effect it might have on the teaching of writing but the value to admissions officers of having in applicant folders samples of writing that could be relied on as the work of applicants and not that of their parents or friends. Countering complaints that the samples would lack the psychometric rigor associated with the Achievement Tests, Wilson argued that admissions decisions invariably took into account information and impressions that were similarly lacking. When the time came for a show of voting cards, a majority of the cards signaled approval of the proposal. The staff dutifully if reluctantly began to make arrangements for the Writing Sample to be included as one of the options for Achievement Test candidates in December 1960 and January 1961.

For advice a few years earlier when Bowles felt pressed to respond to the concerns of the examiners in mathematics, he leaned heavily on Meder, chairman at the time of the Committee on Examinations and a mathematician. Meder had been instrumental in persuading Bowles that the Board should appoint the Commission on Mathematics. For advice on what Bowles had come to refer to in interoffice memorandums as "the English problem," including the possibility of appointing another commission, Bowles turned to two specialists in English who were members of Board-appointed committees. One was Arthur E. Jensen, dean of the faculty and professor of English at Dartmouth College, a member and later the chairman of the Board's Committee on Examinations. The other was Harold C. Martin, head of the program on general education at Harvard University in the area of composition. Martin was serving at the time as chairman of the Committee of Examiners for the Achievement Test in English Composition; he had also been a reader of examination papers in English during the formative years of the Advanced Placement Program. He was held in high esteem by Board and ETS staff members for his personal and leadership qualities as well as for his expertise in the teaching and testing of composition skills. In years to come he would serve as the president of Union College in New York.

Bowles invited Jensen and Martin to a meeting at the Board offices in October 1959 to discuss what to do about the English problem. Joining the group was S. A. Kendrick, vice president for examinations and research. Discussion centered at first on the Writing Sample and on the problem of devising a test that somehow satisfied both English teachers and measurement experts. There was little to say that was fresh about this all-too-familiar issue, however, and talk soon shifted to the prospect of an English commission, a prospect that was probably on everyone's mind. As Martin reported later, the group seemed ready to agree in short order that there was "a need to do for English what the Commission on Mathematics had already started in its own field."[2] Before the meeting adjourned, it was decided that Martin and Kendrick would arrange to meet with one or two English teachers at the secondary level to sketch preliminary plans and that Bowles would seek authority from the trustees to appoint a commission.

To join Kendrick and him in the planning exercise, Martin invited Frances D. Bartlett, chairman of the English department at Scarsdale High School in Scarsdale, New York, and Theodore Johnson, assistant principal of Portland High School in Portland, Maine. They gathered in Boston soon after the New York meeting and for two days pondered various ramifications of a commission. In the end they produced a document titled "A Proposal for the Institution of a Commission on English under the Auspices of the College Entrance Examination Board."[3]

The proposal began by noting continuing dissatisfaction with the kinds and the quality of teaching in English courses provided for students in American secondary schools. It then called for a commission and suggested that its specific purpose should be to improve the quality of instruction for college preparatory students. It recommended that half the commission's members be drawn from secondary schools and half from colleges. Calling attention to the existence of several other groups that were already working toward the same end, the proposal recommended frequent communication with them. Mentioned in this connection were the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE); the College Conference on Composition and Communication (the Four Cs); and the Committee on Basic Issues in the Teaching of English, jointly sponsored by several national bodies. The proposal also recommended that a full-time executive director be appointed. In conclusion, the proposal urged that the commission "constitute itself not only a commission of study and research but a board of missionaries to carry its talent and learning into the schools of the nation."[4]

One person with long and close ties to the College Board whose interest in a Commission on English was unusually strong was Edward S. Noyes. Serving at the time as director of Yale's Master of Arts in Teaching Program, Noyes had occasion to write to Bowles in January 1959 about another matter; he included in his letter a query about the status of plans for such a commission. He had been thinking about the matter himself, he wrote, "but with no tangible results—it is so complex a situation that one hardly knows where or how to begin."[5] The reply from Bowles was decisive: "There will be a commission."[6]

The proposal was first presented to the Committee on Examinations; following their endorsement it was presented to the trustees, who also gave it their blessing. In comments about the proposal at the trustees' meeting, Kendrick linked it specifically to the dilemma created by Wilson's airing the idea of a writing sample.[7] The proposed commission was perceived to offer some hope of finding a way for the Board to measure achievement in English that would satisfy both educational and measurement needs.

Bowles worked hard to persuade Martin to serve as chairman of the commission. After he succeeded, he and Martin worked together to identify prospective members and also someone qualified to serve as executive director. Bowles was particularly interested in including distinguished literary figures on the commission. He pursued Archibald MacLeish, one of his targets, with special fervor.[8] All efforts in this direction failed, however, and Bowles and Martin eventually focused their attention on persons with direct interest, and in many instances classroom involvement, in the teaching of English.

Members of the Commission on English as finally constituted in 1959 were the following:

Harold C. Martin, Chairman of the Committee on General Education,
Harvard University, Massachusetts, *Chairman*
Frances D. Bartlett, Chairman, English Department, Scarsdale High School,
New York
Verda Evans, Supervisor of English, Junior and Senior High Schools,
Cleveland Public Schools, Ohio
Arthur E. Jensen, Dean of Faculty and Professor of English,
Dartmouth College, Hanover, New Hampshire
Glenn Leggett, Vice Provost, former Director of Freshman English,
University of Washington, Seattle
John A. Myers, Jr., Chairman of English Department, The Hun School,
Princeton, New Jersey
Winifred L. Post, Chairman of English Department, Dana Hall School,
Wellesley, Massachusetts
Warner G. Rice, Chairman, Department of English Language and Literature,
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor
David Allen Robertson, Jr., Professor of English, Barnard College,
New York City
Louise M. Rosenblatt, Professor of English, School of Education,
New York University, New York City
Hallett Smith, Chairman, Division of Humanities,
California Institute of Technology, Pasadena
James R. Squire, Executive Secretary, National Council of Teachers of English
and Assistant Professor of English, University of Illinois, Chicago
George Winchester Stone, Jr., Executive Secretary,
Modern Language Association of America, Secretary of Conference
on Basic Issues in the Teaching of English and Professor of English,
New York University, New York City

Through James Squire and George Stone the commission was in direct communication with the NCTE and the Modern Language Association (MLA), respectively. Stone's participation in the Conference on Basic Issues provided additional links with the College English Association (CEA) and the American Studies Association, both of which were sponsoring the conference along with the NCTE and the MLA. Another member of the commission, Hallett Smith, was also an active participant in the conference. With financial support provided by The Ford Foundation, the conference had so far produced two reports: *The Basic Issues in the Teaching of English* and *An Articulated English Program: A Hypothesis to Test*.

When it came to finding an executive director for the commission, one person stood out prominently as a natural choice. Floyd W. Rinker, head of the English department at Newton High School, Massachusetts, widely known and highly respected among English teachers, was on leave, winding up a project concerned with the development of a television course in the humanities. Not only was he qualified, interested, and available, but the office space at 183 Commonwealth Avenue in Boston, used by the humanities project, was also available. Bowles proceeded to sign up both the man and the space.

The commission convened for the first time on 14 and 15 November 1959 at the Hotel Vendome in Boston, across the street from the commission's offices. While not lacking in lively discussion of many subjects, the meeting resulted in practically no plan for specific action. Martin recalled later his difficulty in responding to queries about the work of the commission—queries stimulated by an early announcement—and his admiration for Charles M. Holloway, the Board's director of information services, who managed somehow in a summary statement to convey the impression of a group deliberately proceeding on a well-set course.[9]

A major problem confronting the commission was the lack of consensus within the field itself as well as among commission members regarding the boundaries of the subject area and the definitions of its component parts. "What is English?" was the first question the Conference on Basic Issues had addressed, but this question continued to defy any single, well-established answer. Although composition and literature were generally agreed to be the responsibility of English teachers, how this responsibility should be discharged remained a matter of much debate, and further questions related to the teaching of language—what some were referring to as linguistics—were even more unresolved.

Impressions that the commission was having trouble getting under way were heightened by comparisons with the Commission on Mathematics, which had seemed to know almost from the start where it wanted to go and how to get there. Early reports on the progress of the Commission on English called attention to significant differences between the two commissions. Reporting at the Board's Annual Meeting in 1960, Noyes – who by then was acting as president while Bowles was in Paris on a two-year leave – pointed out that the Commission on Mathematics had dealt with a subject whose curricular patterns were well established and that there was even general agreement on the direction curriculum reform should take.[10] The situation in English was just the opposite, he noted: there was little agreement about what "that vague field called English" was, much less what it should be. He also noted that while the implementation of reforms in teaching mathematics had been greatly facilitated by massive government support available through the National Defense Education Act (NDEA) and the National Science Foundation (NSF), no such support was yet forthcoming for English.

This lack of federal funding for reform projects in English, while regretted, actually served to place the Commission on English in an unusually visible and influential position. The Cooperative English Program, jointly sponsored since 1957 by the MLA, NCTE, CEA, and American Studies Association and supported financially by The Ford Foundation, had made substantial headway through its Conference on Basic Issues. As commission member Stone reported in an April 1960 memorandum to those concerned about the program, however, it was running out of funds and would be able to pick up steam again only if support became available as a consequence of hoped-for changes in the provisions governing NDEA grants.[11] The only good news, he said, was that the Commission on English was under way, its funding assured by the College Board.

While continuing to debate major curriculum issues – a debate stimulated by, and centered on, a thoughtful paper prepared by commission member David Robertson – the commission did set in motion two specific projects. The first involved the preparation of end-of-year examinations; the purpose was to define in "precise, practical, and helpful terms" some of the skills and understandings the commission believed college preparatory students should acquire. This project began with the development by a small committee of a two-hour written examination for students completing the twelfth grade. The committee then went on to develop examinations for grades 9, 10, and 11. The examinations, which included questions on language, literature, and composition, were administered in May 1962 to students at 25 secondary schools. A selection was then made of answers that were judged to demonstrate various levels of proficiency. These, along with the questions, formed the basis for a 1963 publication, *End-of-Year Examinations in English for College-Bound Students: Grades 9–12.*[12]

The second project involved the production of 30-minute kinescopes – 16mm sound motion picture films that could be used directly or as the source of televised presentations – on various classroom practices. Designed to be used in department meetings, conferences, and teacher-training courses, 11 kinescopes were eventually produced, accompanied by kinescripts.[13] The titles included *Teaching a Poem, Grammar and Generative Grammar,* and *Invention and Topics: Or, Where to Look for Something to Say.*

By fall 1960 the ground was being laid for a much more ambitious project – a project that would dominate the commission's agenda for the remainder of its life and in the process make heavy demands on the Board's financial resources. The idea behind it was to do for teachers of English what was already being done for teachers of science, mathematics, and foreign languages – namely, to offer them opportunities to take advantage of summer institutes as a means of updating and expanding their knowledge. Institutes for English teachers would necessarily differ from those conducted for teachers of other subjects in two important respects, however. First, since there was less consensus in English than in other fields about the directions curriculum improvements should take, the purpose of the first institute would be to develop what amounted to a proposed secondary school English curriculum. The materials produced would then serve as the basis for subsequent institutes. The only firm assumption the commission was apparently ready to make about the curriculum was that it, like Gaul, was divided into three parts – in this case language, literature, and composition.

The second difference involved money. Whereas summer institutes for science, mathematics, and foreign language teachers were funded almost entirely by the federal government, funds to support the English institutes would come from the College Board. These funds would need to be ample, because the plans envisaged the existence during the second year of the venture of 20 institutes at 20 universities and the enrollment in each institute of 45 teachers, who would be paid a stipend by the College Board. The rationale for this number of institutes and this number of participating teachers was that the resulting total of 900 teachers would be equal to 1 percent of the estimated 90,000 English teachers in the nation's secondary schools. The funds needed to support such an ambitious undertaking were estimated to exceed more than a million dollars.

When the trustees of the College Board, who had tended to view the Commission on English with approving but mild interest, heard how much money was involved, they decided to take a long and hard look. With Bowles on leave to conduct an international study of access to higher education, it fell to Noyes to mediate between the commission, whose goals he shared as a former professor of English, and the trustees, whose sense of concern he also shared as the Board's acting chief executive officer. It was a difficult time for him. Worries about the magnitude of the commission's anticipated expenses were aggravated by a smaller gap between the Board's total income and expenses than had been forecast and also by the fact that foundation grants were not forthcoming in the amounts expected. Commitments already made to institutions that had agreed to sponsor institutes militated against any substantial cutting of costs. Martin joined Noyes in making as strong a case as possible for the institutes, and in the end the trustees went along.

With ground laid by a curriculum-building institute in 1961, institutes for English teachers at the 20 cooperating universities took place in the summer of 1962. There was general agreement among those involved that the institutes were a success. The financial burden on the College Board was eased by grants that Noyes was instrumental in securing from the Bing Fund, the Danforth Foundation, the Hobby Foundation, the Old Dominion Foundation, and the Victoria Foundation, Inc.

In an independent evaluation of the institute program, funded by the United States Office of Education, Department of Health, Education and Welfare, John C. Gerber, professor of English education at the University of Iowa, employed a team of 12 evaluators to gather data and form judgments about every aspect of the program. Gerber's long report included many specific observations and recommendations.[14] "Taken as a whole," he concluded, "the Institute Program was both comprehensive and intellectually respectable. If the general competence of high school teachers *can* be substantially improved within a summer session, institutes modelled on the CEEB plan seem to be the most promising means for doing it."[15]

The institutes did serve as models for those conducted in the next few years, some of which were supported by grants authorized by the

NDEA when it was finally amended in 1964 to include English. The commission-sponsored institutes also spawned a new array of commission publications, including the *Handbook on Summer Institutes in English* and *Speaking about Teaching;* both books drew from a conference sponsored by the commission in 1965 and were supported financially by the Danforth Foundation.[16]

The final report, issued in 1965 under the title *Freedom and Discipline in English: Report of the Commission on English,* included recommendations with respect to the certification and preparation of English teachers, their professional standards, and their teaching conditions.[17] The substance of the report was concerned with curriculum content and approaches. As expected, the commission recommended a curriculum consisting of three parts – language, literature, and composition – and it offered advice on teaching each part. Two requirements were set for teaching language: teachers should (1) know and understand the nature and the history of the English language and (2) be familiar with the purposes, principles, and procedures of the various approaches to English grammar. The section on literature, the longest section, stressed textual analysis, reflecting the so-called New Criticism, popularized by Cleanth Brooks and Robert Penn Warren. The section on composition placed special emphasis on sound, well-framed assignments and on productive teacher corrections and criticisms.

All the commission's publications, including *Freedom and Discipline in English,* were designed and edited by the Board's publications staff and were published by the College Board. As was true of the publications written by the Commission on Mathematics, they achieved high standards of taste and technical quality. This linkage between the Commission on English as author and the College Board as publisher was substantial as was, of course, the commission's financial dependence on the Board. Connections otherwise between the Commission on English and the College Board were highly tenuous. In his foreword to *Freedom and Discipline in English,* Richard Pearson, who succeeded Bowles as president in 1963, wrote that the publication was "a source of genuine satisfaction to the member institutions, the trustees, and the officers of the College Entrance Examination Board."[18] However gracious it was to make such a statement, it is probable that the commission's work was of substantial interest to only a few of the representatives of member institutions who regularly attended College Board meetings and to only a small percentage of those who served on influential committees of the Board or as members of the staff.

Responding to a request for assistance by the United States Office of Education, arising from the extension of the NDEA to include English, the Board trustees voted in 1964 to keep the commission's Boston office in operation for another three years. The Office of Education made extensive use of the commission's documents about its 1962 institutes and also made use of those individuals who had experience on the commission, or with its institutes, as consultants.

Although in the beginning it had been hoped that the commission would address the problems the Board faced with respect to the Writing Sample, in particular, and the testing of English, in general, the commission restricted its attention to its own agenda. The end-of-year examinations produced by the commission were developed independently of the Board's own examiners, and readers of the publication containing them were cautioned not to confuse these examinations with the Board's admissions tests.[19]

The relevance of the commission to a sizable segment of the English teaching profession was clear: English teachers and other educators vitally concerned about the teaching of English listened to what the commission said and read what it wrote. In this sense the commission had little relevance to the College Board; among those active in the Board's associational affairs or performing duties as members of the staff were few persons for whom the teaching of English, or the teaching of any subject in the curriculum, was a central interest. The commission also lacked relevance in the sense that what it did, or even whether or not it existed, was of no apparent practical significance as far as the Board's economic survival and growth were concerned.

The Commission on English clearly fulfilled the purpose stated for the Board in its charter: "to further the development of representative opinion with respect to educational standards." The importance that the leaders of the Board and the representatives of the member institutions were ready to assign to this purpose, however, was a more debatable issue.

9. The Board's Achievement Tests: "A Difficult Balancing Act"

During a span of roughly 10 years, from the late 1950s to the late 1960s, the College Board's Achievement Tests in secondary school subjects took center stage at several Annual Meetings of the Board and at most meetings of the Committee on Examinations. For Achievement Tests in general, it was yet another case of the best of times and the worst of times. From a revenue point of view the Achievement Tests were doing extremely well; the number of fee-paying candidates rose rapidly until it peaked at more than 600,000 in 1968. Until the volume began to decline, there was every reason to consider the total array of tests as a highly satisfactory product line serving well the needs of colleges during the so-called Golden Decade of expansion in higher education.

On the other hand, for those who were responsible for developing and administering the tests, or who had to deal with the various policy questions they raised, it was a trying time. The Writing Sample, which made its debut in December 1960, stirred up controversies that lasted throughout the seven years of its existence. It gave rise both to administrative problems and to questions of policy, and while ETS was able to solve the former, the College Board had a bruising time coping with the latter. It was not just the Writing Sample that made the Achievement Tests troublesome. The program was groaning from a copious assortment of pressures and pains.

Some pressures were actually the consequence of the program's popularity. As more and more colleges began to use the tests, increasing the number of candidates each year, facilities for registering and testing them, scoring their answer sheets, and reporting their scores were taxed severely. Other difficulties arose because these increases in the number of using colleges were accompanied by increasing diversity in the uses colleges made of the tests. Some institutions, particularly large public universities, were using the scores primarily, if not exclusively, for placement rather than for admissions. While some colleges continued to direct applicants to take tests in the spring of their senior year, or even in the summer following their graduation, other colleges were insisting on earlier, midwinter dates, and still others – on a rolling admissions system – were willing to accept scores at varying times during the year. These variations complicated the task of designing and developing tests in subjects commonly taught in the senior year.

Entirely different problems were created by changes beginning to sweep across the secondary school curriculum as the result of a host of curriculum reform efforts. These problems were similar to those confronting the examiners in mathematics when they voiced concerns that led to the creation of the Commission on Mathematics. Involved were issues both of measurement and of the impact of Achievement Tests on teaching practices, although the manner in which these issues arose, were perceived, and were acted on, varied from subject to subject.

In 1958 the Physics Achievement Test presented a problem of crisis proportions. Students whose schools had begun using a new course in physics developed by the Physical Science Study Committee (PSSC) – a course markedly different from courses in general use – found themselves at a disadvantage when they took the Physics Achievement Test. Suspicions that the test was not appropriate for them were soon confirmed when their scores on the test and the scores of students who had taken conventional courses were analyzed in relation to their SAT scores. As a stopgap measure, admissions officers were advised to take into account the possibility that the scores of PSSC applicants were off by as many as 100 score points. Steps were then taken to appoint examiners knowledgeable about the new course; they helped to develop a special PSSC Achievement Test, which was introduced as an option in 1959–60. Meanwhile, intensive efforts were made to develop a single, composite test that would be suitable for both PSSC students and students with traditional preparation.

This experience with the test in physics served to alert the examiners and the staff members responsible for tests in biology and chemistry that comparable problems were brewing for these tests. Three new courses in biology – color-coded as blue, green, and yellow courses – were being developed by the Biological Sciences Curriculum Study (BSCS). In chemistry one course was under development by the Chemistry Materials Study, and a second course was emerging from the efforts of a group advocating what was called the chemical-bond approach. Champions of all these courses were quick to perceive that the Board's Achievement Tests were inhibiting teachers from adopting the new courses.

Different problems were created by changes taking place in the teaching of modern languages. The thrust was toward mastery of all four skills necessary for the command of a language – listening, speaking, reading, and writing. This meant that to be adequate, tests had to use recording and playback equipment, necessitating special testing arrangements that took account of the sounds produced when tests were administered. Thirty-minute listening tests in French, German, and Spanish were developed by ETS in the 1950s. It was not considered feasible to offer them at College Board test centers, however, and they were made available instead through what was called the Supplementary Achievement Test Program. As a result of this program, candidates who registered for Achievement Tests were able to take one-hour reading tests at regular Board test centers and, in addition, to take listening-comprehension tests at the schools they attended, provided their schools were willing to administer them.

While some teachers regarded this arrangement as satisfactory, others in the field were convinced that the Board would eventually have to administer tests at least capable of measuring listening skills, and preferably speaking and writing skills as well, at its regular test centers. As long as the tests involved reading alone, they were falling short as measuring devices and were conveying the wrong message to teachers.

The Supplementary Achievement Test Program enabled the Board to cope with yet another problem that had plagued it for years: what to do about Achievement Tests in Greek and Italian, tests taken each year by so few students as to make their inclusion in the regular program questionable on the grounds of both adequate statistics and per-candidate costs. A recommendation a few years earlier by the Committee on Examinations that these tests be withdrawn had been reversed by the Executive Committee – forerunner until 1957 to the Board of Trustees – but sentiment in favor of withdrawal had grown stronger since then.

The tests were saved at the twelfth hour by a scheme devised by the vice president for examinations and research, S. A. Kendrick. It involved a simplified arrangement for constructing and scoring the tests, feasible for the small numbers of candidates involved, and the insertion of the tests in the supplementary program. A single examiner was appointed to write each of the tests, with advice provided by several secondary school teachers who were also appointed. The examiner was also assigned the responsibility for grading the answer papers. Examiners were free to use questions requiring written responses; the only stipulation was that the tests be 90 minutes in length. The tests were then made available on the same basis as listening-comprehension tests. The examiners appointed were distinguished scholars in their fields: Moses Hadas of Columbia for Greek and Salvatore Castiglione of Georgetown for Italian.

While this arrangement provided a means of continuing to offer Greek and Italian tests, it complicated the response to requests the Board received to offer tests in other subjects that were studied by relatively few students, notably Chinese and Portuguese. When the decision was made in 1959 to introduce new Achievement Tests in Hebrew and Russian, one of the reasons cited in support of such a move was that these tests could be expected to generate a sufficiently large number of candidates. The arrangements made for Greek and Italian tests, however, were evidence that tests could be offered even if only a few students were likely to take them. Other rational grounds for turning down requests were established, but underlying them was an uneasy sense that the program was simply becoming too complicated.

By 1960 it was generally agreed that the time had come for a full-scale review of the Achievement Tests. Preparations began for a special two-day meeting of the Committee on Examinations. The meeting, held in January 1961, was presided over by the committee chairman, Arthur E. Jensen, dean of the faculty at Dartmouth. Jensen said its purpose was "to prepare the Committee for decisions it would confront as the Board moved to adapt its program to changes in curriculum, admissions, and placement."[1] Participating, in addition to committee members, were the chairmen of several examining committees and various officers and staff members of the Board and of ETS, some of whom were charged with preparing papers or reports in advance.

A highlight of the meeting was the presentation by Henry S. Dyer, at this time vice president for College Board programs at ETS, of a paper titled "A Psychoanalytic History of the College Board Achievement Tests."[2] In the paper Dyer elucidated three conflicts that he said seemed to reside in the Board's psyche, keeping the Achievement Tests in a state of unresolved tension. The first was the conflict between the Board's desire to influence the curriculum and its desire to deny the existence of any such influence. After recalling instances in the Board's history when each of these desires held sway, Dyer suggested that it was time for the Board to resolve its "historic ambivalence." He looked forward to a new era in which "the policies and principles underlying the examination program will be clearer than they have been in the past."[3]

The second conflict revolved around the question of essays in the

Board's Achievement Tests. It was obvious, Dyer observed, that there were many within the Board's constituency who fervently believed that its tests for admission should include questions that required students to write. On the other hand, there were test specialists and others who believed with equal conviction that such questions were neither necessary nor desirable. Reminding the audience of the emotions stirred by the Writing Sample, administered for the first time the preceding month, Dyer voiced a plea for "some way in which we can get some perspective on this perennial controversy and find some cool and sensible solutions to what still remains a hot issue."[4]

Third, Dyer identified a conflict between two criteria by which Achievement Tests were judged: their "educational soundness" and their "administrative feasibility." He said he witnessed a constant struggle going on within ETS between those who were involved in developing the tests and those whose main concern was with statistical standards and administrative procedures. He said he could see the same sort of struggle taking place in a wider setting. On one side were "the examining committees, the secondary school teachers, and the college faculties." They wanted the tests "to be up-to-date and measuring matters of major importance." On the other side were the administrators – "the admissions officers, deans, school principals, and guidance counselors" – who wanted "to be sure that a College Board score means the same thing yesterday, today, and tomorrow."[5]

Conflicts among criteria were also the theme of a later presentation by Kendrick. He described the Board's program of admissions tests as pressed to meet seven criteria, which he identified as adequacy, technical excellence, acceptability, feasibility, simplicity, economy, and flexibility. Emphases placed on the first three tended to push the program toward longer tests and more complex arrangements, whereas emphases on the remaining four pulled it the other way. It was not possible to satisfy all seven criteria in a way pleasing to all concerned. Compromises were inevitable in responding to the conflicting claims of the criteria.

When the group moved on to consider reports by examiner committee chairmen on the status of particular Achievement Tests, the report by Osmond E. Palmer, chairman of the English Composition Test Committee and a member of the faculty of Michigan State University, was of special interest because of concerns aroused by the Writing Sample. He described continuing efforts by his committee to measure writing ability indirectly through the use of various kinds of multiple-choice questions and also interlinear exercises. The committee was seriously handicapped in its work by a lack of dependable criteria against which to evaluate the relative effectiveness of these measurement devices. Teacher grades were used, but teachers usually based their grades on more than writing ability alone and also differed among themselves in their grading standards. To overcome these problems, researchers at ETS were proposing a special study.

At the heart of the proposed study was the idea of using a single group of students (1) to answer sets of questions of the kinds used in the English Composition Test and (2) to write five 20-minute or 30-minute essays in response to carefully phrased topics. Each essay would then be graded on a holistic basis by five experienced readers, and the 25 independent grades thus generated for each student would become the basis for reliable as well as valid criterion measures of writing ability. All the necessary data would therefore be in hand to determine how well scores on the various English Composition Test questions correlated with, or "predicted," writing ability.

Before the two days were over, many other topics were reported on and discussed. In keeping with the intent of the meeting – to prepare the Committee on Examinations for decisions it would confront – no decisions were made or votes taken. Considering the number and the variety of issues that did come before the committee in the next several years, the meeting was both well advised and timely.

Although questions arose during the 1960s about all the Board's Achievement Tests, the problems in English received the most intense and sustained attention by the membership, the central committees, and the staff. The Commission on English, which Bowles hoped in the beginning might be a source of light for the Board's "English problem," chose to remain aloof from issues related to the Writing Sample and the English Composition Test. The Committee on Examinations, the trustees, and the officers all became involved in earnest efforts to deal responsibly and rationally with these issues. But it became increasingly difficult for them to describe the most controversial issue, the Writing Sample, in rational terms, much less settle it convincingly.

First, it had become accepted by all those influential in the Board's affairs that the Board must adhere in its testing programs to the highest standards of educational measurement. And yet the Writing Sample not only failed to conform to psychometric principles and procedures but appeared to mock them. Second, the Writing Sample was being offered in response to a majority vote of the membership in an unusually effective demonstration of the Board's democratic system of governance. It was not really clear, therefore, that the Board owed its primary allegiance to standards of educational measurement; the Writing Sample made it appear that its first commitment was to its members even if this meant setting psychometric standards aside. Third, the Writing Sample forced on the Board the consideration of two questions that Board officials had tried at times to ignore and at other times to answer, with an equal lack of success: whether its tests should provide opportunities for students to write and whether its tests were intended to serve educational as well as measurement functions.

The trustees took the position that the Writing Sample was being offered as an "experiment" and that its future would be determined on the basis of a systematic evaluation of its usefulness and consequences. The trouble was that there was so little consensus regarding the purposes served by the Writing Sample that criteria for evaluating it were elusive. Although various surveys and studies were conducted, the most significant fact was that a substantial number of institutions either required applicants to submit writing samples or recommended that they do so. Even when some institutions became disenchanted after a year or two and ceased to require the samples, others, in roughly equal numbers, initiated such a requirement. The result was that the total number of candidates remained at about the same high level year after year. Under these circumstances the trustees concluded they had no real choice but to continue the experiment. The Committee on Examinations, equally at a loss as to how to deal with the matter, decided before one of its meetings to arrange a debate between an outspoken advocate and an outspoken critic of the Writing Sample. To state the affirmative case they invited Arthur Howe, dean of admissions at Yale, one of the institutions whose presidents had insisted the Board should reinstitute writing in its examinations. Howe emphasized three points: The Writing Sample "added flavor and form to some applications"; it "encouraged development of the art of essay writing in secondary schools"; and it represented "a pitting of psychometric experts and the managerial group up against practicing admissions officers."[6]

Frank D. Ashburn, headmaster of the Brooks School in North Andover, Massachusetts, argued the case against the Writing Sample. His main point was that the Writing Sample was not a true measurement device; he claimed it "violated most of the worthwhile premises of the Board and ETS in regard to scores, norms, control, and all forms of effective composition measurement." He concluded that it was "a sheep in wolf's clothing."[7]

The debate, within formal and informal circles, might have gone on inconclusively for many more years if William Prentice, president of Wheaton College, had not been selected to serve as chairman of the Committee on Examinations. Before becoming a college president, Prentice had been a psychologist. He took a firm stand against the Writing Sample and argued on behalf of a resolution to withdraw it at the Annual Meeting of the Board in 1967.[8] The vote went in favor of the resolution despite many votes against it and strong pleas for the Writing Sample to continue. One of those who argued with passion against the resolution was Charles O'Connell, a University of Chicago dean, who became chairman of the College Board in 1968. His field was English.

Possibly influencing the votes of some institutional representatives was the fact that by 1967 a 20-minute essay had made its debut as a constituent part of the English Composition Test at one or more administrations of the Admissions Testing Program. The essay owed its presence to an unanticipated outcome of the study of the test-question types that Palmer had outlined at the special meeting of the Committee on Examinations in 1961. Although the study was intended only to provide information about the relative effectiveness of various kinds of questions used in the test, one of the researchers suggested that it be carried a step further. This step involved withdrawing one of the 20-minute essays from the criterion side of the study and treating it instead as part of the English Composition Test. When this was done, it turned out that the essay outperformed all the other types of questions as a predictor of writing ability. The margin of superiority was small – the interlinear exercise and most of the multiple-choice questions were also found to function well as predictors.[9] Nonetheless, there was a certain excitement in discovering that an essay could prove its mettle in statistical as well as educational terms.

The possible use of a 20-minute essay in the English Composition Test might not have been considered seriously if the Writing Sample was not there haunting and taunting the Board's trustees and officers. Once it was determined that arrangements could be made to enlist the necessary number of readers, and that readings on a large scale could probably be conducted successfully, plans went forward rapidly to include an essay in the English Composition Achievement Test scheduled for administration in December 1963.

The administration went smoothly, as did the reading, which attracted a certain amount of publicity that included a few friendly paragraphs in the Talk of the Town section of *The New Yorker* and a critical editorial by Norman Cousins in the *Saturday Review*. Cousins thought that making students write anything under such pressure was no way to teach them good writing habits. The trustees authorized the staff to offer the English Composition Test with Essay on two or more testing dates each year in the future. The number of administrations increased to as many as three a year. One obstacle to including essays in the tests at all five administrations was the uncertain availability of teachers as readers on particular dates. Another obstacle was financial: it was estimated that the additional costs incurred whenever the test included an essay were a half million dollars.

The return of the essay was greeted in various ways. It was perhaps most warmly welcomed by English teachers, although many other persons also felt very good about it. To them it represented at least a step in the direction of a more sensible test of writing and one that conveyed a clear message about the importance of writing. The reaction of many admissions officers was not so much affirmative or negative as it was quizzical. They were not convinced the Writing Sample served a useful purpose, particularly since they were assured that scores on tests with the essays could be interpreted and used in the same way as scores on tests without them. It was those who were concerned about the Board's finances and growth who eyed the Writing Sample most coldly. To them the half million dollars for each administration of the English Composition Test that included an essay was money down the drain; they did not see that the Writing Sample was increasing the use made of the Board's tests and services, and they could contemplate other uses for the money involved that made more sense to them.

By 1964 the Commission on English, while still at work on its final report, had reached agreement on its major recommendations regarding the teaching of English. Pearson decided it was an appropriate time to appoint a special committee of English scholars to review the Board's current program of admissions tests in light of these recommendations and to recommend possible modifications. Henry W. Sams, chairman of the English department at Pennsylvania State University, agreed to chair such a committee, and Harold Martin, who was deeply engaged at the time in the work of the commission, agreed to serve as the committee's vice chairman.

The Sams committee, not surprisingly, decided that the Board should measure the outcomes of instruction in the three areas of language, or linguistics, literature, and composition, which the commission had identified as the integral components of the English curriculum. Subcommittees were created to examine the testing possibilities in each area. The full committee then met to discuss the recommendations of each subcommittee and to decide how to incorporate them into a single set of recommendations. They concluded that the Board should proceed toward the ultimate goal of a three-hour examination that would be capable of measuring student competencies in the three areas, and it would consist mainly of questions requiring written answers. As a first step toward this goal, they proposed that two new tests be developed and introduced: a two-hour test of composition and literature, consisting of essay and multiple-choice questions, to be introduced in the regular Admissions Testing Program; and a one-hour test in language study, or linguistics, to be offered—in the beginning at least—in the Supplementary Achievement Test Program on the same basis as the Greek and Italian tests.[10]

Efforts by the Committee on Examinations and the staff to respond to these recommendations met with both success and failure. The Achievement Test in Literature was developed, mainly because of the ideas and determination of Alan Purves, an ETS staff member, and it was introduced in the Admissions Testing Program in 1968.[11] It consisted entirely of multiple-choice questions, however, and it stood alone instead of being incorporated in a test that combined literature and composition. A test in language study was also developed. Surveys indicated that there was very little interest in the test, within either secondary schools or colleges, and as a consequence steps were not taken to offer it.

The realization that the plans of the Commission on English for a tripartite curriculum were unrealistic, in view of the virtual absence of linguistics in the programs of most secondary schools, made it pointless to consider further the Sams committee's idea for a three-hour, three-part examination. In any case, offering such an examination in English would not only have presented formidable technical and administrative problems; it would also have raised the question, familiar to those responsible for the curriculums of schools and colleges, of establishing a balanced response to the claims of all subjects in the curriculum.

While questions related to English received the lion's share of attention within the Board during the 1960s, questions about Achievement Tests in other subjects also came to the fore, precipitated almost entirely by the changes taking place in the secondary school curriculum. Questions persisted about the adequacy of the Board's testing of physics. The separate test for PSSC candidates continued to be offered for several years, following its introduction in 1959–60. From the beginning, however, it created a problem for students who were not sure if they should take this test or the one intended for those with traditional preparation. This problem became more acute as teachers increasingly taught what could be called a blend of the new and the old. There was therefore a sense of relief and satisfaction when it was determined that it was possible to develop a composite test that could be considered appropriate for PSSC candidates and also for those with the traditional preparation.[12] Offered for two years along with the other two physics tests, in 1964 the composite test became the Board's only Achievement Test in Physics.

The experience thus gained proved to be invaluable when the introduction of new courses in biology and in chemistry began to present comparable problems. Special procedures were devised for checking on the appropriateness of tests for students whose preparation was based on such courses and, when it was evident that the tests were inappropriate, for developing composite tests. While these procedures satisfied those whose primary or sole interest was in maintaining measurement standards, they did not respond fully to the concerns of those who were intent on winning acceptance and adoption of the new courses. Proponents of these courses were inclined to believe that the Board should support their efforts as it had so prominently met the needs of the reform movement in mathematics. It did not appeal to them that composite tests emphasized content that was part of most courses and not the instructional outcomes they considered most significant. Particularly in biology, it was only after several meetings between proponents of the BSCS courses and College Board representatives that there was any meeting of minds on the desirability and feasibility of a single test for all students regardless of preparation.[13]

Changes taking place in mathematics teaching, which the Board's Commission on Mathematics had helped to bring about, enabled the examiners to include more questions each year on the so-called new math in the Intermediate and Advanced Mathematics Achievement Tests. In 1964 these two tests were replaced, however, by a totally new pair. One test, labeled Level I, or Standard, was designed for the majority of students; it was essentially a composite of the two former tests. The second test, labeled Level II, or Intensive, was intended for students with unusually strong preparation in mathematics.

The most intractable problem facing the Board involved the testing of achievement in modern languages. The established arrangement for students to take reading tests in French, German, and Spanish at regular test centers and, in addition, to take listening tests in these subjects at their schools, if their schools were among those willing to offer them, was generally regarded as only a partial solution. The goal set by the Committee on Examinations was to offer Achievement Tests in modern languages that would be capable of measuring both reading and listening skills and could be administered at regular centers. Studies conducted by members of the ETS staff convinced them that it was possible to construct a one-hour test consisting of a 40-minute reading section and a 20-minute listening-comprehension section.

The stumbling block was the necessity of playback equipment and of arrangements that would avoid distractions caused by the sounds produced. It became evident in the early sixties that supervisors at practically all test sites had ready access to playback equipment; it was also determined that most, if not all, could assign candidates taking the language tests to separate rooms. A proposal to offer the tests was prepared and acted on favorably by the Committee on Examinations. For several years the staff held back from taking the plunge, however; in addition to concerns about the administrative complexities and the costs involved, there were lingering doubts about the readiness of colleges to insist that all applicants demonstrate listening as well as reading abilities.

If the Board dallied on the matter of language tests, it acted with dispatch in revising its testing of history and social studies. In 1962 the long-standing Social Studies Achievement Test was withdrawn, and in its place two new Achievement Tests were introduced – the American History and Social Studies Test and the European History and World Cultures Test. While this change was in the main a response to curriculum developments, it was also responsive to urgent pleas by the influential heads of several schools for women. In requiring applicants to take Achievement Tests in the middle of the senior year, selective colleges were preventing students at these schools from taking the Social Studies Test; many of the questions on this test were about American history, a senior-year subject. They needed another option, and since European history was taught in the junior year, a test in this subject was what the heads were after the Board to offer.

Only a few years after the meeting in January 1961 at which it prepared itself to face impending issues related to the Achievement Tests, the Committee on Examinations could look back to deliberations involving tests in every academic area. Repeatedly in the course of these deliberations the committee would return to the question of the role Achievement Tests played in influencing as well as reflecting the curriculum. "Should the tests follow or lead the curriculum?" was how the question was frequently phrased. There was general agreement that the tests actually performed as both leaders and followers. In 1964 the committee decided it was time to amend that portion of its charge that delineated its function with respect to the Board's Admissions Testing Program. As it stood, the charge stated that the tests were called upon "to assure fair, valid, and reliable measures of a candidate's readiness for college and of his proficiency in the subjects." The committee voted to add to this statement the following clause: "and to assure that the program reflects and supports strong teaching practices in colleges and secondary schools."[14]

The chairman of the Committee on Examinations in 1964 was Harold Howe II, who was serving at the time as director of the Learning Institute of North Carolina and was later to serve as United States commissioner of education. Reporting on the work of the committee at the Annual Meeting of the Board, he spoke about the Board's educational responsibilities:

> The only possible posture is one of cautious and responsible interest in both causing and following curriculum change – a difficult balancing act. The very nature of the Board requires that it be deeply involved in providing some leadership in curriculum change; sometimes through its testing program; sometimes through the appointment of special commissions; sometimes merely acting as a forum; occasionally through cooperative efforts as in the case of the Advanced Placement Program. We have in the past continually preached a doctrine that tests were fair to all curricula and that we did not use them as devices to bring about curriculum change. But equally clearly we have denied in practice what we preach. This can be an attitude of a healthy organization, that it is able to do one thing and say another. Responsible people can have a folklore that makes them feel better and a basis for action which is different.[15]

As the decade of the 1960s came to a close, interest in the curriculum waned – in the nation as a whole, in schools and colleges, and within the College Board. The war in Vietnam, the civil rights movement, and concerns about an array of other matters deflected attention from educational standards. Within higher education it became more urgent to cope with student unrest, public distrust, and unbalanced budgets than to worry about the curriculum. Within secondary education it became more important to listen to what students said was "relevant" to them than to heed what university professors who headed curriculum reform projects had to say.

It was a stressful period for the College Board as well. Finances became a central concern as colleges in increasing numbers decided it was no longer in their interest to require Achievement Tests. Representatives of member institutions grew restive about what they perceived to be increasingly centralized control over the Board's affairs. Tensions arose between the officers of the Board and of ETS regarding the respective responsibilities of the two organizations. In 1969 Richard Pearson resigned as president of the Board. He was succeeded in 1970 by Arland Christ-Janer, president of Boston University, to whom matters other than the Board's connections with teachers and the curriculum were of pressing concern.

In 1971 composite reading/listening Achievement Tests in modern languages finally made their debut. They were offered on only one date, however, and reading tests, which had previously been available in all five administrations of Achievement Tests, were offered on only one other date. Intended to serve as a compromise among conflicting interests, the arrangement managed to inconvenience or otherwise annoy admissions officers, guidance counselors, test-center supervisors, and many candidates. The composite tests were quickly withdrawn and the pattern of previous years was restored. Those who had argued against introducing the composite tests for the past five years could say their doubts had been confirmed. Those who had argued for them could say it was a case of too little and too late.

In 1970 the practice of offering at least once each year a form of the English Composition Test that included a 20-minute essay was discontinued for financial reasons.

Two years later, in a reorganization of standing committees, the Committee on Examinations was dissolved. Among the new committees that were established, the one that came closest in function to the Committee on Examinations was named the Council on Entrance Services. Nothing in the charge to this body suggested that it was to be concerned about the support that Achievement Tests were capable of giving to strong teaching practices.[16]

10. Is There a Teacher in the House? Restoring the Voice of Faculty

Following its incorporation in 1957 the College Board continued to grow at a phenomenal rate. The total number of tests and financial forms processed, used as a rough gauge of this growth, increased from 604,596 in 1956–57 to 1,963,942 in 1960–61. In the same period the Board's total income more than doubled, from $3,135,650 to $7,529,527. All the major income-producing programs sponsored by the Board were flourishing – the Admissions Testing Program, the Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test, the Advanced Placement Program, and the College Scholarship Service. The Board's research and publication activities were also expanding.

Also on an upswing was the Board's involvement in the curriculum. This was a particularly noteworthy development, since one had only to turn the calendar back a few years to return to a time when Bowles and Fels were stoutly maintaining that it was not the business of the Board to interfere with the curriculum. Now, as the 1950s came to an end and the new decade began, the Board was following its Commission on Mathematics with its Commission on English, nurturing its Advanced Placement Program, and administering the Writing Sample – a device clearly intended to apply pressure to teachers to strengthen their teaching of writing skills.

All of this evidence of continuing growth and expansion pointed toward an even more significant role for the Board in American education in the years ahead, and this prospect stimulated Bowles to undertake the preparation of a major statement about the future challenges in college admissions and the tasks he believed these created for the College Board. Using as his vehicle two of the traditional *Annual Reports* by the Board's chief officer, he devoted one report – actually a report on both 1957–58 and 1958–59 – to the topic "Admission to College: A Perspective for the 1960s"[1] and the second report – which actually covered the following two years – to the topic "Admission to College: A Program for the 1960s."[2] The writing of both reports took longer than he anticipated because of his full-time involvement in a two-year UNESCO-sponsored and Paris-based international study of access to higher education. In writing the second report, he drew on the services of Richard Pearson, the Board's executive vice president, as coauthor.

Both reports dealt with the same broad topical areas: Student Identification and Guidance, the Nature of College Preparation, Admissions Operations, Examinations for Admission to College, Student Finance, and Research. In both reports college preparation was the second topic.

In the first report Bowles observed that "the development, or, more accurately, the redevelopment, of the Board's concern with the nature of college preparation has been one of the most interesting and, to some extent, most unexpected results of the postwar admissions pressures."[3] Recalling how the Board had "specifically and publicly" abandoned its original purpose of controlling secondary school instruction in 1942 when it discontinued both the written subject-matter examinations and the publication of its definitions of requirements, he called attention to the reemergence of this purpose in the creation of the Commission on Mathematics and also in the decision to assume responsibility for the Advanced Placement Program.

That Bowles and Pearson considered this purpose to be an enduring one for the Board was clearly evident in the second report. They wrote: "As the 1960s unfold, it seems clear that the Board should continue to be active in the field of college preparation. Indeed, since both rising enrollments, which permit changing standards, and curricular changes, which define these standards, come to a focus in the college admissions process, the Board has no alternative. It will be compelled to be active in this area."[4]

They offered a number of observations and recommendations with respect to the Board's continuing involvement in college preparation. Regarding the Commission on English, they recommended, "in view of pressures for work in other areas," that the trustees and the commission reach an early agreement on a date for the commission to complete its work as well as on the funding of this work.[5]

Regarding the Writing Sample, they suggested that it pointed toward the need in the Admissions Testing Program for the best "performance test" in English composition that could be developed. "Requirement of the essay exercise," they noted, "is important in itself as a statement that a student must be able to write his native language with some facility and forcefulness in order to be considered for admission to the most selective colleges in the land."[6]

Regarding the Advanced Placement Program, which they referred to as "the cutting edge of curriculum change," they recommended that consideration be given to additional subjects and to subjects at even more advanced levels of college work. They also suggested that the subject-matter conferences – the conferences that brought teachers new to the program together with experienced school and college teachers – be organized in the future on a different basis. In their words:

> As noted earlier, the Board depends upon the participation of teachers from both schools and colleges and it needs this participation on a continuing basis. The best way to achieve this, judging from the experience of the annual Colloquium on College Admissions, is through a residence meeting which permits full discussion of a timely subject on which papers have been prepared, and subsequent publication of the papers for distribution to a wider audience. This would involve sponsorship by the Board of a series of Colloquiums on College Preparation, with one or two meetings scheduled each year that would, over a period of years, cover all the subject fields. Such a reorganization of the advanced placement conferences would seem to be a worthwhile goal.[7]

This idea for a series of Board-sponsored colloquiums on college preparation was possibly stimulated by the fact that the Ninth Colloquium on College Admissions, held at Arden House in October 1961, was devoted to the topic "The Changing College Preparatory Curriculum." Persons known to be informed about changes taking place in various subjects were invited to speak, and their papers formed the basis for a later publication. At this colloquium, unlike previous colloquiums in the series, the participants included, in addition to the usual large number of admissions officers and staff members of the Board and ETS, a small contingent of academic deans, heads of subject-matter departments, and secondary school curriculum supervisors.[8]

Bowles returned to the United States in 1962 and resumed his active presidency of the Board. Within a year, however, he resigned to accept a position at The Ford Foundation as director of educational programs. He was succeeded by Pearson. Commenting on the leadership that Bowles had given to the Board during its years of extraordinary growth, Pearson called particular attention to his development of the concept of access to higher education – a concept increasingly applied both in this country and abroad. He credited Bowles with stretching the notion of college admissions from one confined to the recruitment, application, and selection processes of particular colleges to one that embraced the multitude of factors affecting the transition of students from lower schools to college.[9]

Before leaving for Paris, Bowles had encouraged the trustees to appoint a committee to study and make recommendations regarding the Board's organizational structure in light of its considerable growth.

Such a committee was created; named the Committee on Organization and Functions, it was chaired by B. Alden Thresher, director of admissions at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. The committee devoted several years to its assignment. In its final report it recorded its belief that the Board's role in the foreseeable future should revolve around problems of access to higher education. In its view access was not as open as it should be, and the committee cited the following reasons: (1) limited provisions for precollege counseling, (2) inadequate admissions procedures, (3) imbalance between students' financial needs and resources available to help them meet college costs, and (4) deficient instruction in many schools. "Secondary education," the committee declared, was "still of uneven quality in relation to student capacities, student capabilities, and college expectations."[10]

The committee made a special point of distinguishing between two functions served by the Board – what it termed a "service or program function" and a "forum or discussion function." Through its recommendations it sought to bring about an equal balance between these two. In the committee's view, one of the demands the forum function placed on the Board was to provide "a means by which individuals from member institutions and from the educational community generally can come together to consider questions of educational standards as they affect access to higher education."[11]

The committee's recommendations with respect to the Board's governance had the effect of strengthening the authority of the president and the staff and weakening the power of the standing committees, including the Committee on Examinations and the Advanced Placement Committee. While heretofore these committees had acted on occasion as final arbiters on some matters, it was concluded that in the future they should function as advisory bodies to the president. In other recommendations the committee sought to make the trustees both more representative of, and responsive to, the persons who served as representatives of the Board's member institutions.

The Committee on Organization and Functions issued its report in 1963, the same year that Pearson succeeded Bowles as president. Having been close to the developments in the Board's recent history that had no doubt influenced the committee's perceptions and recommendations, Pearson was as ready as the committee was to recognize a forum function for the Board, distinct from its role as a sponsor of testing and other income-producing services, and, further, to recognize a need for the Board to devote certain of its forum activities to curriculum content and standards.

In 1963 at Pearson's initiative the Board sponsored a colloquium centered on the teaching of foreign languages. Under the direction of Theodore Anderson, chairman of the department of Romance languages at the University of Texas at Austin, the colloquium included presentations by leading foreign language educators, including Nelson Brooks of Yale, Stephen A. Freeman of Middlebury, Moses Hadas of Columbia, and Albert H. Marckwardt of Princeton.[12]

In considering future curriculum initiatives, Pearson now turned his attention to forum activities that, instead of concentrating on particular subject areas, would address the total secondary school curriculum. In his *Annual Report* for 1964–65 he proposed for the Board's future consideration the creation of "a permanent academic council" whose purpose would be to study "issues of balance in the academic programs of the last two years of school and the first two years of college."[13]

One of the educational leaders Pearson came to know was Ellsworth Tompkins, executive secretary of the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP). In the course of a series of conversations the two men conceived the idea of a jointly sponsored colloquium that would bring influential educators in both schools and colleges together to consider, on the one hand, the implications for colleges of the curricular changes going on in secondary schools and, on the other hand, the implications for schools of the changes taking place in college curriculums. In April 1965 such a colloquium was conducted; its subject was "The Challenge of Curricular Change." Taking the lead in organizing and chairing the colloquium was Gene L. Schwilck, superintendent of Oak Park and River Forest high schools in Illinois.[14]

At the colloquium Pearson presented a paper titled "Proposed: A Commission on General Education in School and College." The paper dealt with the possible establishment of a commission whose purview would be the curriculums of the last two years of secondary school and the first two years of college. The commission, Pearson said, would be "looking to the question of maintaining a national consensus in all subjects and for all students during these critical four years." Pearson described the commission he had in mind:

> Such a commission should be privately supported. It should be representative of faculty interests, not those of association representatives, test makers, or administrators. Such a commission should be supplied with the money and staff to undertake studies of the scope required, in order to understand where imbalance, stress, and poor articulation exist. In particular, it should look to the progress of all the able students of the country during this period,

> and should anticipate the appearance of the culturally disadvantaged student within the college-bound population. The commission should operate on a continuing basis and should undertake, as its principal function, the formulation of broad recommendations to the educational community, with special attention to the school and college teachers who must deal ultimately with the various problems that have been discussed.[15]

While he did not identify the College Board as a potential sponsor of the proposed commission, it was generally assumed that this was his intention. Pearson later made arrangements, with trustee approval, to appoint a special committee charged with planning an initiative for the Board along the general lines of the paper's proposal. Appointed chairman of this committee was Henry W. Sams, chairman of the English department of Pennsylvania State University; the other members were:

William R. Hochman, Professor, Department of History, Colorado College, Colorado Springs
James Jarrett, Associate Dean of Education, University of California at Berkeley
John M. Kemper, Headmaster, Phillips Academy, Andover, Massachusetts
Julia McCollom, Chairman, Department of Humanities, Lower Merion High School, Ardmore, Pennsylvania
William T. Mooney, Department of Chemistry, El Camino College, Via Torrance, California
Mary Ann Roberts, Department of Mathematics, Bellaire High School, Texas

The planning committee met several times in 1967 and 1968. The outcome of its deliberations was a proposal to the trustees for the establishment by the College Board of a council on curriculum, "an adjunct body of the Board," designed to serve as "a center of research and prescription, of information and advocacy, at a critical time in American education." In the proposal were sections devoted to the need for such a council, special topics the council might address, and strategies the council might adopt, including the appointment of special commissions "to influence and reform schools and college curriculums." Also discussed were the council's organizational structure, its relationship to the College Board, and its financing. Regarding the last, the committee proposed that the Board "provide continuing financial support sufficient to provide a basic budget for the Council" and suggested that additional funds be sought from foundations and government agencies.[16]

By the time the proposal reached the trustees, the members were preoccupied with many matters that were far afield from curriculum reform, both within their home institutions and within the College Board. As discussed in chapter 9, colleges in the late sixties were beset with student protests, disenchanted alumni and legislators, ever-tighter budgets, and no-growth prospects. Secondary schools, on the other hand, were coping with a more heterogeneous mix of students than ever before and were finding that many of their students were neither prepared nor eager for rigorous academic study; they were demanding instead that they be offered programs they believed to be "relevant" to their own interests and concerns.

It was an increasingly stressful time for the College Board. Marked decreases in the number of Achievement Test candidates and slowdowns, if not decreases, in the use of other programs contributed to growing concerns about the Board's finances. From within the Board's membership came increasing complaints that institutional representatives had too little voice in the Board's affairs. At the same time the officers of the Board and of ETS found themselves in increasing disagreement about the respective roles and responsibilities of their two organizations, leading the trustees of both organizations to create a joint committee to study possible changes in the way the organizations were related to one another.

Altogether, it was not a propitious time for consideration of a Board-sponsored council on the curriculum. The situation was further complicated by changes in the Board's leadership. In 1969 Pearson resigned, and during a period of search for a new president, George Hanford acted as the Board's chief officer. In September 1970 Arland Christ-Janer was installed as the College Board's third president. During the three years of his presidency Christ-Janer devoted major attention to building a firm economic foundation for the Board, establishing improved working relationships between the Board and ETS, and bringing about changes in the Board's structure as an association that increased the influence of regional groupings of institutional members.

Not only did the proposed council on curriculum not materialize, but concerns in general about the curriculum and educational standards began to fade. Also, faculty members became less and less visible at meetings of the trustees and advisory committees. In a reorganization of standing committees in 1972 three committees that had traditionally included teachers were discharged: the Committee on

Examinations, the Advanced Placement Committee, and the Council on College-Level Examinations. To advise the president on the Admissions Testing Program, with which the Committee on Examinations had primarily been concerned, the Council on Entrance Services was established. The Council on College-Level Services was formed to offer advice on both the AP Program and CLEP. In keeping with the general shift toward greater participation of the membership in the governance of the Board, provision was made for each of the six regional assemblies to name one member of each of these councils. Since those active in the assemblies tended to be administrators, they not surprisingly tended to nominate administrators rather than faculty members.

This falling off of faculty involvement and of interest in matters that mainly concerned faculty was not intentional; it resulted in the main from a decided centering of attention by the officers on the Board's financial well-being, on the managing and marketing of existing programs, and on the development of new programs and services. The practice sprang up among the officers of referring to themselves as the Board's corporate managers, and Christ-Janer referred to staff members of the regional offices as educational salesmen.

The increased emphasis placed on the Board's role as a purveyor of services did not rule out forum initiatives, however. In 1970 Christ-Janer collaborated with William W. Turnbull, president of ETS, in establishing the Commission on Non-traditional Study under the joint sponsorship of both organizations. Chaired by Samuel B. Gould, former chancellor of the State University of New York, and partially funded by the Carnegie Corporation of New York, this commission was one of a number of groups in the late sixties and early seventies that examined and put forth recommendations regarding innovative approaches to undergraduate education.[17]

Christ-Janer resigned as president of the College Board in the summer of 1973 to assume the presidency of New College in Florida. Summarizing his years at the College Board, he called particular attention to steps taken to enhance the Board's financial status, to create a more democratic governance structure, and to establish more effective working relationships with ETS.[18] That he said nothing about the Board's involvements with faculty and with educational standards was perfectly understandable because there was actually nothing to say. He led the Board during a period when other priorities seemed both to him and to the trustees to demand attention. His presidency provided evidence that any involvement of the Board in curriculum, beyond that produced in the natural course of events by the Advanced Placement Program, was discretionary rather than inevitable and largely dependent on the commitment or inclination of whoever happened to be president.

The next president of the College Board was Sidney P. Marland, Jr., who had served most recently as assistant secretary of education in the United States Department of Health, Education and Welfare. During his presidency, from 1973 to 1978, there was a strong upsurge of interest once again in the Board's responsibilities "to further the development of representative opinion with respect to educational standards." As a consequence, there was also a renewed concern for bringing faculty back into the Board's committee structure.

While a number of circumstances contributed to this swing of the pendulum, one of the most significant was that starting in 1963–64 the average scores of SAT candidates began steadily and mysteriously to go down each year. By 1973, the year in which Marland became president, average SAT-verbal scores had dropped 35 points, from 478 to 443, and the average mathematical scores had dropped 21 points, from 502 to 481. As this downward trend continued – for 10 years, 11 years, 12 years – it drew increasingly widespread attention and finally became a national concern.

In 1975, in cooperation with Turnbull, Marland arranged to appoint a blue-ribbon panel to study thoroughly and independently all possible reasons for the decline. The panel – named the Advisory Panel on the Scholastic Aptitude Test Score Decline – was chaired by Willard Wirtz, chairman of the National Manpower Institute and a former secretary of labor. Harold Howe II, by then a Ford Foundation vice president, was named vice chairman. Among the remaining 19 members were many leading educational administrators and scholars. Three secondary school teachers – of English, mathematics, and social studies – also served as members.

In announcing the panel's creation, Marland noted that "no topic related to the programs of the College Board has received more public attention in recent years than the unexplained decline in scores earned by students on the Scholastic Aptitude Test."[19] This public interest, Wirtz observed later, lay not so much in "the psychometric technicalities of the SAT score decline" as in "its implications regarding what is widely perceived as serious deterioration of the learning process in America."[20]

While the panel dutifully addressed the question of the SAT as a source of the decline, it concluded that the explanation for the decline did not lie in the test itself but rather in a lowering of the ability of the students who constituted the candidate population. Because there had been changes in the composition of this population during the period in question – increases in the proportion of minority students, for example – the panel considered the possibility that these compositional changes accounted for the decline. Analyses of the population revealed, however, that from 1970 on its composition had remained essentially the same. It was therefore necessary to look elsewhere for the explanation. The panel examined carefully a large number and a remarkable variety of possible causative factors and cautiously attributed to each one as much plausibility as it appeared to merit. Along the way the panel became convinced that the decline in scores was to a significant degree the result of "changes over the past 10 to 15 years in the standards to which students at all levels of education" were held.

In thus calling attention to declining educational standards as not only an explanation for the SAT score decline but a deplorable fact of national life, the panel stimulated the Board's leadership to consider seriously the question of the Board's overall responsibilities as an educational organization. The charter was a continual reminder that one of the Board's purposes was "to further the development of representative opinion with respect to educational standards." Marland undertook a review of the steps taken in the past to fulfill this purpose, including the appointment of the commissions on mathematics and English, and of the steps the Board might take in the current circumstances. One conclusion was that the Board needed to establish stronger connections with the academic community if it was to embark on any new ventures involving educational standards.

While this review of purpose and future directions was going on within the staff, another study was being conducted by the Committee on Mission and Accountability, which the trustees appointed in 1975. Charged with studying the Board's "past, present, and future role," this committee was ready with its findings and recommendations at about the same time the SAT score-decline panel was reaching its conclusions. The panel, the committee, and the Board's officers were apparently of one mind about the need for the Board to become engaged again with the question of educational standards. A major conclusion of the committee was that renewed emphasis should be given to the Board's role in "the development of representative opinion with respect to educational standards." Regarding this role the committee expressed its opinion that the Board was "uniquely capable of making a contribution because of its long history of providing national and regional forums where representatives of schools and colleges can express their convictions and come to conclusions through a democratic process."[21]

In connection with its recommendation for increased emphasis on educational standards, the committee observed that "special efforts should be made to acquaint school and college faculty with the work of the College Board and to encourage them as representatives of member institutions to participate in program development, forum activities, and matters of policy formulation."[22]

How to engage more fully with faculty members, particularly in policy and planning, posed a genuine challenge. Although the Board's membership included hundreds of colleges and schools, their faculty members rarely participated in the Board as representatives. The Board actually functioned in many respects as an association of admissions, financial aid, and guidance professionals, and it was from their ranks that most of the trustees and members of advisory councils and committees came. Appointed officers and staff members of the Board were also in only rare instances former teachers at either the secondary or the college level. Their responsibilities were either administrative or professional in terms of specialties such as accounting, personnel, publications, or public relations. Many who were concerned with particular programs of the Board had backgrounds similar to those in colleges and schools whose special needs were served by the programs.

The main connection of the Board with teachers was through the committees appointed each year to work with test specialists at ETS on the development of examinations and related materials used in programs the Board sponsored. While the contribution of these teachers to the work of the Board was valued, they were not generally considered to be part of the Board's governance or policy-making structure. This was true also of the school and college teachers who assembled each year to read and grade Advanced Placement Examinations. They were even more remote from the Board because they were actually employed by ETS.

In seeking to establish some line of communication with faculty, President Marland was able to take advantage of the existence at the time of so-called academic discipline committees, created for the express purpose of clarifying relationships between Advanced Placement and CLEP examinations that covered the same or similar ground. The members of these committees, drawn from the Advanced Placement, CLEP, and Achievement Test development committees, included some of the most experienced and respected examiners. The chairman of each academic discipline committee was considered to be an eminently qualified and conveniently available spokesperson for his or her particular subject area. In 1975 Marland instituted the practice of inviting the chairmen of all the academic discipline committees to meet with him and other Board officers informally once a year in New York to discuss matters of mutual interest and concern, including the possibility of creating a new body within the Board to speak for teachers.

For the first couple of years the agendas for these meetings were set by the staff, and the meetings were chaired by a Board officer. As time went on, however, the committee chairmen intimated that they would be glad to take on the responsibilities for planning and conducting the meetings. It was therefore agreed that they would select one of their members to preside at the next meeting. The evening before the 1976 meeting they chose for this role C. A. VanderWerf, chairman of the Chemistry Academic Discipline Committee, a member of the faculty of the University of Florida, and a former president of Hope College, Michigan.

One of the first recommendations of the group as it gathered steam was in the form of a readily granted request that the word discipline be dropped from the names of the committees and that the committees be referred to as academic advisory committees. This change was particularly gratifying to the chairman of the German committee. The committees not only needed a new name but a new charge, since the work involved in aligning Advanced Placement and CLEP examinations, which had occasioned their appointment, was gradually winding down. The chairman therefore discussed with the staff various ways in which the committees might serve other functions. The outcome was a charge that called on the committees to serve a liaison function between the Board on one side and teachers and associations of teachers on the other side. In addition, the committees were to serve as primary sources of advice to the Board staff on matters related to examinations and curriculum developments in particular subject areas.

Within a year each academic advisory committee was able to report steps taken or planned in response to the updated charge. Some committees arranged for presentations and discussions of examinations in their particular subjects at national or regional meetings of teacher associations, in some instances holding their meetings at the same time. Other committees invited association representatives to attend their meetings, some of which were held in New York rather than at ETS in Princeton in order to make it more convenient for College Board officers to attend.

The English and mathematics committees were particularly active. The English Academic Advisory Committee, not surprisingly, renewed the never-ending campaign to include writing in the English Composition Achievement Test. In response to the committee's forceful urging, the trustees directed that the subject of testing composition ability be discussed at all regional meetings. At the committee's request the regional offices took steps to ensure that English teachers would attend these meetings in addition to the usual large number of admissions officers, financial aid officers, and guidance counselors. Many English teachers did attend. At each meeting straw votes were taken following the discussion of the English Composition Test, with participants asked to indicate if they favored including an essay in the test. The votes ran so high in favor of essays that the trustees concluded they had no choice but to direct that the practice be reinstated of inserting a 20-minute essay in at least one form of the test each year. It was generally suspected that the straw votes may have gone the other way without the presence of the English teachers.

The Mathematics Academic Advisory Committee focused its attention on the possibility of working cooperatively with the Mathematical Association of America (MAA) and the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) on matters of mutual interest. The committee's efforts bore fruit when the Committee on Mutual Concerns of the College Board and the MAA was created. Meeting at least once a year on a regular basis, this group was able on more than one occasion to bring about a meeting of minds on potentially divisive issues.

The English and mathematics committees followed with special interest the work of the SAT score-decline panel. Marland, recognizing the roles increasingly played by the committees as the Board's links with English and mathematics teachers, invited the chairmen of both committees to participate in the panel's deliberations. Edmund J. Farrell, chairman of the English Academic Advisory Committee and an officer of the National Council of Teachers of English, and Alfred L. Putnam, chairman of the Mathematics Academic Advisory Committee and a professor of mathematics at the University of Chicago, served as special consultants to the panel throughout the remainder of its lifetime.

The chairmen of all the academic advisory committees continued to meet from time to time with College Board officers and staff members, and the major topic continued to be the possible establishment within the Board's governance structure of an additional body that would serve as the Board's academic arm. The chairman of the Physics Academic Advisory Committee, John Russell, who was also the only faculty member on the Board of Trustees, proposed at one point that a faculty assembly be created along the lines of the College Scholarship Assembly. This struck Marland and other Board officers as too large a leap. An advisory council, comparable with the Council on Access Services, Council on Entrance Services, and Council on College-Level Services, seemed to them to be more appropriate. While not all advisory committee chairmen viewed such an additional body as necessary or desirable, most of them thought it would be worthwhile to pursue the idea. The chairmen of three academic advisory committees were therefore appointed to work with the staff in drawing up a specific proposal, which was as follows:

> 1. That there shall be a Council on Academic Affairs and that this Council shall, acting under the following charge, make recommendations to the Board of Trustees—through the President of the College Board.
>   *a.* Shall advise and recommend with respect to efforts to acquaint school and college faculty with the work of the College Board.
>   *b.* Shall advise and recommend with respect to efforts to increase the participation of school and faculty members in program development, forum activities, and matters of policy formulation.
>   *c.* Shall advise and recommend on matters related to the mission and work of the College Board that affect the interests and concerns of the academic community, particularly in regard to academic standards.
>   *d.* Shall advise and recommend with respect to the implications for the College Board of developments and trends related to curriculum and teaching, particularly as these cut across specific subject-matter areas and levels of education.
>   *e.* Shall advise and recommend with respect to establishing or furthering relationships of the College Board with associations of teachers and scholars in various subject areas, as a means of bringing about increased mutual understanding and cooperation.
> 2. That the Council shall consist of no more than fifteen members, one of whom shall be designated chairman and one vice chairman. The chairman of each Academic Advisory Committee shall serve ex officio on the Council. The chairman and vice chairman shall be appointed by the chairman of the College Board on nomination of the President, after consultation with the Council, and with the approval of the Trustees. The membership of the Council shall regularly include secondary school classroom teachers.[23]

Approved by the entire group of academic advisory committee chairmen at their next meeting, these recommendations were taken by President Marland to the trustees, who approved them unanimously. The Council on Academic Affairs became a reality in 1978, with the following charter members:

C. A. VanderWerf, Professor of Chemistry, University of Florida, Gainsville, *Chairman*

Micheline Dufau, Chairman, Department of French and Italian, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, *Vice Chairman*

Ralph E. Dixon, Associate Superintendent for Instruction, Albuquerque Public Schools, New Mexico

Frank Edward Emory, Jr., President, Associated Students of Duke University, Durham, North Carolina

Edmund J. Farrell, Professor of English Education, Department of Curriculum and Instruction, University of Texas at Austin

Elizabeth M. Gamsky, Representative of Milliken University, Decatur, Illinois, to the Student Advisory Committee, Illinois Board of Higher Education

Katherine P. Layton, Mathematics Teacher, Beverly Hills High School, California

Robert A. Lloyd, Chairman, Department of Art, Phillips Academy, Andover, Massachusetts

David S. Mesirow, Chairman of Social Studies Department, John Adams High School, Portland, Oregon

Alfred L. Putnam, Professor of Mathematics, University of Chicago—The College, Illinois

John J. Russell, Professor of Physics, Southeastern Massachusetts University, North Dartmouth

Joseph Schraibman, Professor of Romance Languages, Washington University, St. Louis, Missouri

Lynn Quitman Troyka, Professor of Writing, Queensborough Community College (CUNY) and Center for Advanced Study in Education, Bayside, New York

E. Peter Volpe, Professor and Chairman of Biology, Tulane University, New Orleans, Louisiana

Arnold Webb, Executive Director, Educational Planning and Support, New York City Public School District, Brooklyn, New York

Eugene Weber, Associate Professor of German, Swarthmore College, Pennsylvania

Henry R. Winkler, President, University of Cincinnati, Ohio

The Council on Academic Affairs proceeded to plan and sponsor a roundtable discussion of general education and the core curriculum. It featured a presentation by Henry Rosovsky, dean of the Harvard faculty of arts and sciences, of Harvard's core curriculum plan, which was attracting considerable attention at the time. Conducted on a Sunday afternoon in October 1978 at a New York City hotel, it was attended by close to five hundred faculty members and academic officers from colleges and schools within a two-hundred-mile radius of the city.[24] The next year the council sponsored a conference in Chicago on foreign languages and international education, which attracted a large number of foreign-language teachers in the area.

High on the agenda of the council's meetings during its first three years was the question of a possible College Board initiative pointed toward a new national consensus regarding educational standards. During these years, however, the Board experienced a rapid succession of presidents. President Marland retired in 1978. He was succeeded by Robert J. Kingston, deputy director of the Foundation for the Humanities, who served for a year. In 1979 George H. Hanford became the Board's sixth president.

Unlike Christ-Janer, Marland, and Kingston, who came to the College Board as outsiders, Hanford spent almost his entire career at the Board, initially as the Board's treasurer and eventually as a senior vice president. In his own words he "wore many different hats," and it is difficult to think of any major Board activity in which he was not directly involved at one time or another, including the Commission on Mathematics, the steps leading up to the Board's incorporation in 1957, and the work of the Willard Wirtz Advisory Panel on the Scholastic Aptitude Test Score Decline. His background touched even farther into the Board's history. His father was a distinguished Harvard dean, and Hanford earned a liberal arts degree and a business school degree from Harvard, the institution whose influence on the Board's development was considerable.

Hanford confronted a number of pressing problems as he took over the reins of the Board, including a spate of initiatives within the states and the federal government to regulate standardized testing programs. Nevertheless, he continued to consider various ways in which the Board might constructively participate in efforts to increase the quality of education afforded all secondary school students. He turned to the Council on Academic Affairs as a primary source of advice, and no group within the Board was forthcoming with more encouragement and support for the idea of the Board's engaging actively with issues of curriculum content and standards.

The College Board's readiness in 1980 to embark on initiatives directly concerned with educational standards could be viewed as a pendulum-swing back to the situation at the time of the Board's founding, when concerns about curriculum content and the quality of schooling loomed large in the minds of its leaders. For a while, in the forties and early fifties, the Board went to the other extreme, renouncing with vigor any claim to a standard-setting role. The pendulum then began to return with the advent of the Advanced Placement Program, the Commission on Mathematics, the Commission on English, and also the Writing Sample, although there was more confusion than consensus within the Board about the actual extent and precise nature of its obligation to influence the curriculum. This trend was arrested in the late sixties when the Board's leadership became so preoccupied with other priorities that it lost sight of the fact that one of the purposes of the Board, according to its charter, was "to further the development of representative opinion with respect to educational standards." In the 1980s the pendulum appears to be on the move again, resuming its swing back to its starting point of 80 years ago. Thus, on the matter of influencing the substance and standards of American education, the College Board has clearly demonstrated a capacity for taking a remarkably diverse set of positions.

Postscript: 1980–1986

It is fitting that John Valentine should be the author of this volume about the College Board's connection with the classrooms of America. Beginning in 1959 with his appointment as director of examinations and except for a two-year stint on special assignment as executive secretary to the Commission on Non-traditional Study, he has remained at the heart of that connection. Indeed, during the 1970s, when the Board's attention was being focused more on the process of admission to college, he was the only staff member concerned exclusively with academic preparation for college and our only full-time link to the academic community. In his position as associate for academic affairs, he was able both to champion, and to effect the establishment of, the Council on Academic Affairs.

His 10 chapters bring the history of the College Board's evolving relationships to the curriculum and with teaching faculties up to 1980. As American education entered the new decade, an undercurrent of concern with the quality of the enterprise was clearly evident. The findings of the Advisory Panel on the Scholastic Aptitude Test Score Decline, published in 1977, had called attention to a lowering of standards, particularly in secondary education; in response to that observation and to the concerns being expressed by others, a number of projects dealing with that condition were being mounted. In fact, Mortimer Adler and John Goodlad were already at work, respectively, on *The Paideia Proposal* and *A Place Called School.* Steve Bailey at the National Academy of Education, Ernest Boyer at the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, and Theodore Sizer under the auspices of the National Association of Secondary School Principals and the National Association of Independent Schools were getting under way the projects that produced, respectively, *An Education of Value, High School,* and *Horace's Compromise.* And in 1980 the College Board initiated its Educational EQuality Project. These efforts, together with those of the National Commission on Excellence in Education, which produced *A Nation at Risk,* formed the nucleus of the impetus for the reform movement in secondary education that blossomed in 1983 and served, among other outcomes, to focus attention on the secondary school curriculum.

That the College Board was so well positioned to play a significant role in the movement was a result of circumstances John Valentine so well describes. Those ties binding the College Board to the curriculum were strong and central to the Board's work in the early years, when the content of academic preparation for college and the coverage of college entrance examinations were synonymous. Over the years those ties gradually loosened, tightened just a bit in the late 1950s and early 1960s, and then loosened again as multiple-choice tests became the norm and the attention of the College Board leadership became more focused on the process by which students entered higher education than on the academic preparation they received for it. As John points out, it was not until the last half of the 1970s that the long-term trend was reversed and those ties began to be strengthened again.

In one of those curious twists of fate, two then seemingly unrelated developments occurred in the mid-1970s that later combined to accelerate the forging of even closer connections over the past six years. Administratively speaking, one was the appointment in 1975 of that Advisory Panel on the Scholastic Aptitude Test Score Decline to study why SAT scores had been going down since 1963–64. The other was the creation in 1978 of the Council on Academic Affairs, serviced, beginning in 1981, by the Office of Academic Affairs under the direction of Vice President Adrienne Bailey. Substantively, the first resulted from attention to a recommendation by the Wirtz panel that the College Board ought to do something about what the panel perceived to be a lowering of academic standards around the point of transition from school to college. The second developed out of the recognition of a need to take account of the overlapping interests of the committees responsible for the tests in a given academic discipline administered by the Board in more than one testing program. The coordinated effort to accommodate the interests of the academic community in the work of the College Board under the aegis of the Council on Academic Affairs provided a natural setting in which to begin to meet the challenge posed by the score decline panel. The result was the Educational EQuality Project, which has been at the forefront of the College Board's effort to redesign and strengthen its ties to the academic community. Launched in 1980 with the help of my associates in the president's office, Rexford G. Moon, Jr., and Yvonne L. Wharton, and of John Valentine as associate for academic affairs, the EQuality project is a 10-year program designed simultaneously to stimulate improvement in academic preparation for college and to assure equality of access to higher education under the new, higher standards.

The first goal is, of course, consonant with the aims of the educational reform movement of the 1980s, the *Q* in EQuality. The second constitutes a reaffirmation of the commitment made by the College Board in the 1960s to support efforts to open up access to higher education for the nation's minority youth, the *E* in EQuality.

The idea for the EQuality project evolved from the pursuit of what were initially two separate lines of inquiry. One resulted from the deliberations of the Advisory Panel on Minority Concerns. Its members had become convinced that students from disadvantaged educational backgrounds lacked the academic skills, or competencies, that made it possible for their majority counterparts to succeed more readily in college. In particular, the panel members resonated to a competency they called "drawing conclusions from data," a concept introduced by John Monro, former dean of Harvard College and then a teacher of freshman English at predominantly black Miles College in Birmingham, Alabama. Monro demonstrated what he had in mind by presenting essays of varying quality that commented on some tables of ethnic distribution patterns in selected states.

The panel's attention to the particular skill required of students in that exercise led to the recognition that the other, more traditional competencies such as the three Rs are also involved when students do college-level work. Dennis Gray of the Council for Basic Education was recruited to take a look at the existing literature and to prepare a background paper suggesting what the full array of such skills might include.

Gray identified seven skills: reading, writing, speaking and listening, doing mathematics, drawing conclusions from data, taking tests, and studying. His draft definitions were discussed at seven "urban dialogues," conversations involving school and college teachers and administrators from institutions serving large populations of minority youth; the dialogues were held in the winter and early spring of 1981. Starting with Gray's definitions and without foreknowledge of what earlier dialogues had concluded, each dialogue came to roughly the same conclusions. The groupings under reading, writing, speaking and listening, and doing mathematics remained generally intact; but taking tests was subsumed under studying, and drawing conclusions from data became the more comprehensive skill of reasoning, leaving six Basic Academic Competencies. While the Advisory Panel on Minority Concerns was pursuing its line of inquiry, the academic advisory committees, which, under the purview of the Council on Academic Affairs, are responsible for general oversight of the content coverage of the Board's various subject-matter tests, were being asked to consider what subjects students entering college should have studied in secondary school and what the outcomes of such study should be. A unique aspect of this activity was the judgment that subject-matter preparation for college should be described, not in terms of Carnegie units or years of study or number of courses taken, but in terms of content mastered during the high school years. During 1980–81 more than 200 school and college teachers serving on the Board's test-development committees, the academic advisory committees, and the Council on Academic Affairs participated in the process by responding to questionnaires and taking part in meetings devoted to outlining the subject-matter outcomes – in English, the arts, foreign language, social studies, science, and mathematics – that would best equip students for the demands of the most selective colleges.

In May 1981 the competency descriptions and the subject-matter outcome outlines were brought under discussion at a symposium in St. Louis, Missouri, an event that many of the 100-plus participants likened to an "academic Woodstock." The participants came in about equal parts from the ranks of those who had taken part in the urban dialogues and in the subject-matter committee deliberations and from a cross section of other school and college teachers from across the country. After two days of intensive discussion, they came to a consensus on two points and settled on the next steps with respect to a third point. First, they determined that the competencies and the subjects are equally important – that a student needs the competencies to study the subjects on which to hone the competencies. Second, they agreed unanimously on the wording of statements for the six Basic Academic Competencies and commended a seventh and an eighth competency, having to do with observing and with using computers, for future consideration. Third, they agreed that what students need to know about the six subjects should be expressed in terms of outcomes and that immediate steps should be taken to flesh out the outlines that had been discussed at the symposium.

The first agreement was perhaps the most fundamental – the assertion that both the competencies and the subject areas should be used to define the preparation needed by entrants to *all* four-year and two-year institutions of postsecondary education; the participants believed simply that no distinction should be made between what aspirants to two- and four-year, open and selective, colleges need to know and be able to do. The availability of the statements describing the necessary competencies made them the first and most immediately useful product of the EQuality project. They were used in whole or in part by many state authorities and systems of higher education as well as by individual institutions to define their expectations of entering students. When the statements were discussed in dialogues with representatives of business and industry, they proved to express their expectations of "new hires" as well. And the armed forces indicated that they wanted their recruits to be similarly prepared.

Meanwhile the Board's academic advisory committees and the Council on Academic Affairs built on the outlines of expected subject-matter outcomes and in the spring of 1982 submitted them for comment to the appropriate professional associations in the various fields of study, to 24 dialogues involving school and college teachers in all parts of the country, and to groups of students and parents. Out of these deliberations came a summary draft of the statements defining the desired outcomes in the six Basic Academic Subjects. The Council on Academic Affairs reviewed and approved these statements in February 1983.

The council had earlier encouraged the Board to continue explorations and consultations concerning an emerging need for competency in the use of computers. To this end the Board conducted widespread consultations, and in March 1983 an ad hoc advisory panel reviewed and revised a statement on Computer Competency: An Emerging Need, which was also accepted by the Council on Academic Affairs.

The results of this unique, three-year process of consultation and consensus building were brought together and published in May 1983 under the title *Academic Preparation for College: What Students Need to Know and Be Able to Do.* Now widely known as the Green Book, it outlines the knowledge and the skills students need in order to have a fair chance at succeeding in college. It does so by sketching learning outcomes that could serve as goals for high school curriculums in the six Basic Academic Subjects and by identifying the original six Basic Academic Competencies on which depend, and which are further developed by, work in these subjects. The Green Book also calls attention to two additional competencies, using computers and observing, whose value to the college entrant is increasingly being appreciated. By the end of 1986 more than 300,000 copies were distributed.

The next three years, 1983 to 1986, were spent in preparing a sequel to the Green Book in each of the six Basic Academic Subjects — six sequels that would suggest but not prescribe not only how the outcomes called for in the Green Book might be achieved but also how the teaching of the Basic Academic Competencies might be integrated with the teaching of each of the six subjects. All are subtitled *Teaching for Transition from High School to College.* Titled *Academic Preparation in English, Mathematics, the Arts, Social Studies, Science,* and *Foreign Language,* these achieving books, as they have come to be called, seek to respond to requests for suggestions about how subject-matter outcomes called for in the Green Book goals might be achieved and to encourage further nationwide discussion about what should be happening in our high school classrooms. These suggestions are not meant to be prescriptive or definitive, but are intended to spark more detailed discussion and ongoing dialogue among teachers who are responsible for preparing students for college and to create a better understanding among guidance counselors, principals, superintendents, and other officials who must understand the work of high school teachers if they are better to support and cooperate with them.

In the deliberations that led to the Green Book and its sequels, care was taken to avoid attention to the testing implications of the definitions of competencies and subjects that were being forged. As in the Commission on Mathematics and the Commission on English, the intent was always to suggest curricular change (and then to modify the tests to reflect such changes as did occur) and not to force curricular change by first changing the tests. Now, with the EQuality project well into the second half of its 10-year life span, attention is being given to the need to bring the Board's testing instruments into better congruence with the desired outcomes.

In 1900 the College Board's founding fathers first determined what the common academic entrance requirements of their institutions should be and then devised some examinations to reflect those requirements. In 1986 the cycle was repeated. Under the aegis of the Office of Academic Affairs, a determination has been made as to what the required outcomes of academic preparation ought to be. There remains the task of ensuring that the Board's test offerings in the latter years of the twentieth century reflect and support those outcomes, just as the original examinations reflected the common college entrance requirements established in its first years. For this task the College Board will surely continue to need the help of teachers.

George H. Hanford
President, The College Board, 1979–1986

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